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OFFICE OF
THE SECRETARY OF STATE
WASHINGTON

January 10, 1977

Sir:

Re: Your "Bootleg" Copy of the Team B Report

The copy you saw on Saturday was obtained by INR about ten days ago. Since it was a "draft", and since no input from State or any other agency had been requested or suggested, INR did nothing but show it to Saunders, Habib, and Sonnenfeldt. It never occurred to them to let you know about it.

The final version was printed on Friday and will be delivered to the Department sometime this afternoon. With it will be Team B drafts on Air Defense and ICBM accuracy. All of these will be brought up to you as soon as they arrive.

PFIAB/NSC Review Completed.

MORI C03205844 Pgs 4-58 only.

Jock

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ROUTING			
TO:	NAME AND ADDRESS	DATE	INITIALS
1	Mr. Saunders		
2	INR/RSE		
3			
4			

	ACTION		DIRECT REPLY		PREPARE REPLY
	APPROVAL		DISPATCH		RECOMMENDATION
	COMMENT		FILE		RETURN
	CONCURRENCE		INFORMATION		SIGNATURE

REMARKS:

FROM: NAME, ADDRESS, AND PHONE NO.	DATE

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(Security Classification)

Mr. Saunders
INR/State

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Access to this document will be restricted to those approved for the following specific activities:

Warning Notice
Sensitive Intelligence Sources and Methods Involved
NATIONAL SECURITY INFORMATION
Unauthorized Disclosure Subject to Criminal Sanctions

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National Intelligence Officers

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16 December 1976

MEMORANDUM FOR THE NATIONAL FOREIGN INTELLIGENCE BOARD

SUBJECT: Team B Report on Soviet Strategic Policy and Objectives

1. Attached is the Team B Report on Soviet Strategic Objectives for NFIB consideration. The two other reports--on ICBM accuracy and low altitude air defense--are being prepared in similar format, but are not yet ready for release. These reports, however, have not changed in substance from the original reports of the study groups, and it is these versions which should be used in preparation for the NFIB meeting on Tuesday, 22 December.

2. I want to caution you--on behalf of the Director--that this document is not for dissemination to consumers of intelligence. The intended audience for the next and final step in the experiment is the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board and the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs. Those recipients, together with the Director, will then provide for an overall assessment of the validity and utility of the experiment.

Richard Lehman
Deputy to the DCI for National Intelligence

Attachment

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Top Secret

[redacted]

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INTELLIGENCE COMMUNITY EXPERIMENT IN COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS

SOVIET STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW

REPORT OF TEAM "B"

Top Secret

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December 1976

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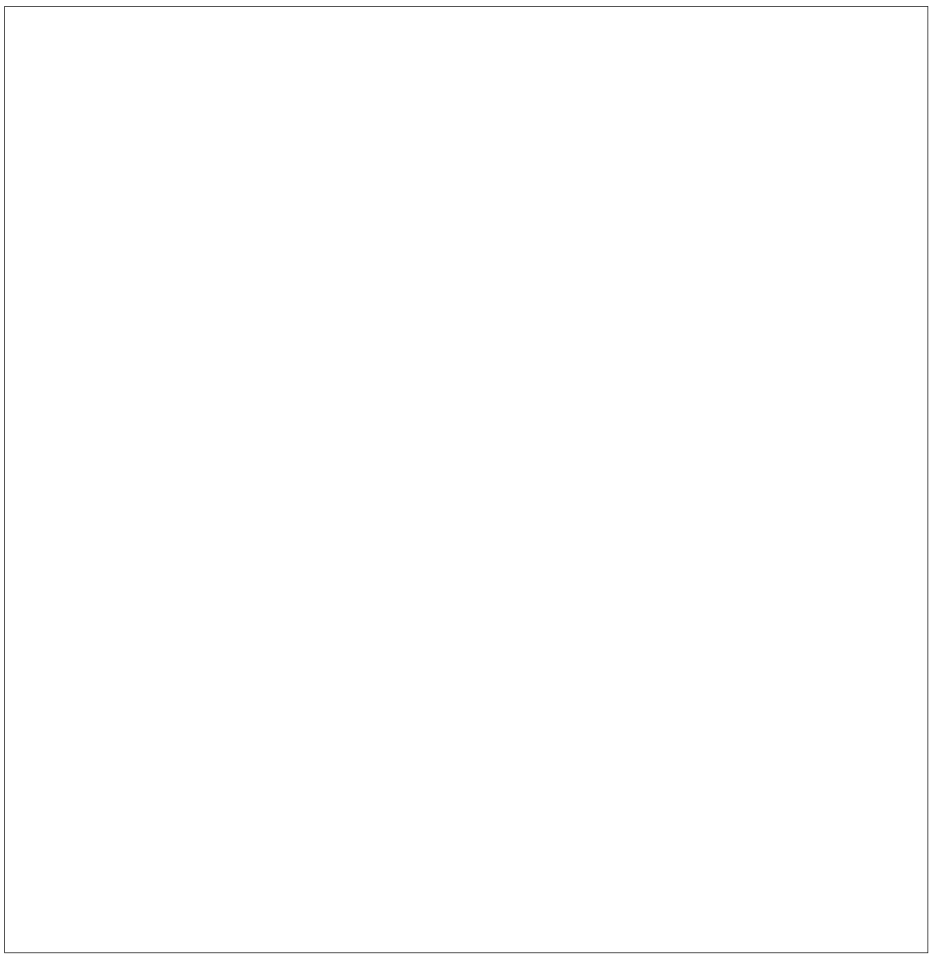

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SOVIET STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES: AN ALTERNATIVE VIEW REPORT OF TEAM B

NOTE

This document is one part of an experiment in competitive analysis undertaken by the DCI on behalf of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board. The views expressed are those of the authors and do not represent either coordinated National Intelligence or the views of the Director of Central Intelligence.

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INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The mandate of Team "B" was to take an independent look at the data that go into the preparation of NIE 11-3/8, and on that basis determine whether a good case could be made that Soviet strategic objectives are, in fact, more ambitious and therefore implicitly more threatening to U.S. security than they appear to the authors of the NIEs. If the answer to this question was positive, they were further to indicate what accounts for the NIEs unsatisfactory assessments. Members of Team "B" were deliberately selected from among experienced political and military analysts of Soviet affairs known to take a more somber view of the Soviet strategic threat than that accepted as the intelligence community's consensus. However, the Team made every endeavor to look objectively at the available evidence and to provide a responsible, non-partisan evaluation.

No attempt has been made in this Report to arrive at anything like a net assessment: U.S. capabilities are not touched upon except to give perspective to certain Soviet programs. The Report concentrates on what it is that the Russians are striving for, without trying to assess their chances of success. Nor has Team "B" sought to produce a full-fledged counterpart to NIE 11-3/8, covering the same range of topics: its contents are selective, as befits the experimental nature of the Team's assignment. Failure of the Team to address itself to any given subject should not be taken to mean that it necessarily concurs with the NIEs' treatment of it.

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A certain amount of attention is given to the "track record" of the NIEs' in dealing with Soviet strategic objectives, in some cases going back to the early 1960's. The purpose of these historical analyses is not recrimination, which, given the Team's advantage of hindsight, would be pointless as well as unfair; rather, Team "B" found certain persistent flaws in the NIEs that do not disappear with the change of the teams responsible for drafting them. It concluded, therefore, that only by

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tracking over a period of time NIE assessments on any given subject is it possible fully and convincingly to determine what methodological misconceptions cause their most serious errors of judgment.

The Report consists of Three parts. Part One seeks to clarify the assumptions and judgments that underpin NIE evaluations of Soviet strategic objectives. Part Two is a collection of ten papers which analyze critically specific Soviet efforts in the field of offensive and defensive forces covered in NIE 11-3/8. Part Three is a summary overview of current Soviet strategic objectives, as perceived by Team "B". An Annex traces the NIE treatments between 1962 and 1975 of Soviet strategic nuclear forces. The Report is preceded by a Summary.

It needs stressing that the present Report was prepared in some haste, members of Team "B" being allotted twelve weeks (and in the case of some of them, less than that) in which to digest a vast amount of material and prepare a finished draft. Given the complexity of the subject, this time clearly was insufficient and the resultant product suffers from flaws. Even so, Team "B" feels confident that its criticisms, analyses, and recommendations ought to contribute to the improvement of the treatment of Soviet strategic objectives in future National Intelligence Estimates.

In the preparation of this Report, Team "B" heard briefings by the following experts to whom it wishes to express its gratitude: Mr. Fritz Ermarth, Mr. Richard B. Foster, Maj. General George Keegan, Dr. Sherman Kent, Dr. Andrew Marshall, and Mr. Gordon Negus. Capt. John P. Prisley (USN, Ret.) contributed to the preparation of the analysis of Soviet ASW efforts in Part Two.

Team leader	:	Professor Richard Pipes
Associates	:	Professor William Van Cleave
		Lt. Gen. Daniel Graham, USA, (Ret.)
		Dr. Thomas Wolfe, RAND Corporation
		General John Vogt, USAF, (Ret.)
Advisory Panel	:	Ambassador Foy Kohler
		The Honorable Paul Nitze
		Ambassador Seymour Weiss
		Maj. General Jasper Welch, USAF
		Dr. Paul Wolfowitz, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

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SUMMARY

Team "B" found that the NIE 11-3/8 series through 1975 has substantially misperceived the motivations behind Soviet strategic programs, and thereby tended consistently to underestimate their intensity, scope, and implicit threat.

This misperception has been due in considerable measure to concentration on the so-called hard data, that is data collected by technical means, and the resultant tendency to interpret these data in a manner reflecting basic U.S. concepts while slighting or misinterpreting the large body of "soft" data concerning Soviet strategic concepts. The failure to take into account or accurately to assess such soft data sources has resulted in the NIEs not addressing themselves systematically to the broader political purposes which underlie and explain Soviet strategic objectives. Since, however, the political context cannot be altogether avoided, the drafters of the NIEs have fallen into the habit of injecting into key judgments of the executive summaries impressionistic assessments based on "mirror-imaging," i.e., the attribution to Soviet decision-makers of such forms of behavior as might be expected from their U.S. counterparts under analogous circumstances. This conceptual flaw is perhaps the single gravest cause of the misunderstanding of Soviet strategic objectives found in past and current NIEs.

A fundamental methodological flaw is the imposition on Soviet strategic thinking of a framework of conflicting dichotomies which may make sense in the U.S. context but does not correspond to either Russian doctrine or Russian practice: for example, war vs. peace, confrontations vs. detente, offense vs. defense, strategic vs. peripheral, nuclear vs. conventional, arms limitations vs. arms buildup, and so on. In Soviet thinking, these are complementary or mutually supporting concepts, and they by no means exclude one another.

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One effect of "mirror-imaging" is that the NIEs have ignored the fact that Soviet thinking is Clausewitzian in character, that is, that it conceives in terms of "grand strategy" for which military weapons, strategic ones included, represent only one element in a varied arsenal of means of persuasion and coercion, many of them non-military in nature.

Another effect of "mirror-imaging" has been the tendency to misconstrue the manner in which Soviet leaders perceive the utility of

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those strategic weapons (i.e., strategic nuclear forces) to which the NIEs do specifically address themselves. The drafters of NIE 11-3/8 seem to believe that the Soviet leaders view strategic nuclear weapons much as do their U.S. analogues. Since in the United States nuclear war is generally regarded as an act of mutual suicide that can be rational only as a deterrent threat, it is assumed that the USSR looks at the matter in the same way. The primary concern of Soviet leaders is seen to be the securing of an effective deterrent to protect the Soviet Union from U.S. attack and in accord with the Western concept of deterrence. The NIEs focus on the threat of massive nuclear war with the attendant destruction and ignore the political utility of nuclear forces in assuring compliance with Soviet will; they ignore the fact that by eliminating the political credibility of the U.S. strategic deterrent, the Soviets seek to create an environment in which other instruments of their grand strategy, including overwhelming regional dominance in conventional arms, can better be brought to bear; they fail to acknowledge that the Soviets believe that the best way to paralyze U.S. strategic capabilities is by assuring that the outcome of any nuclear exchange will be as favorable to the Soviet Union as possible; and, finally they ignore the possibility that the Russians seriously believe that if, for whatever reason, deterrence were to fail, they could resort to the use of nuclear weapons to fight and win a war. *The NIEs tendency to view deterrence as an alternative to a war-fighting capability rather than as complementary to it,* is in the opinion of Team "B", a grave and dangerous flaw in their evaluations of Soviet strategic objectives.

Other manifestations of "mirror-imaging" are the belief that the Russians are anxious to shift the competition with the United States to other than military arenas so as to be able to transfer more resources to the civilian sector; that they entertain only defensive not offensive plans; that their prudence and concern over U.S. reactions are overriding; that their military programs are essentially a reaction to U.S. programs and not self-generated. The NIEs concede that strategic superiority is something the Soviet Union would not spurn if it were attainable; but they also feel (without providing evidence for this critical conclusion) that Russia's leaders regard such superiority as an unrealistic goal and do not actively pursue it.

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Analysis of Soviet past and present behavior, combined with what is known of Soviet political and military doctrines, indicates that these judgments are seriously flawed. The evidence suggests that the Soviet leaders are first and foremost offensively rather than defensively minded. They think not in terms of nuclear stability, mutual assured destruction, or strategic sufficiency, but of an effective nuclear war-

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fighting capability. They believe that the probability of a general nuclear war can be reduced by building up one's own strategic forces, but that it cannot be altogether eliminated, and that therefore one has to be prepared for such a war as if it were unavoidable and be ready to strike first if it appears imminent. There is no evidence that the Soviet leadership is ready, let alone eager, to reduce the military budget in order to raise the country's standard of living. Soviet Russia's habitual caution and sensitivity to U.S. reactions are due less to an inherent prudence than to a realistic assessment of the existing global "correlation of forces;" should this correlation (or the Soviet leaders' perception of it) change in their favor, they could be expected to act with greater confidence and less concern for U.S. sensitivities. In fact, there are disturbing signs that the latter development is already taking place. Recent evidence of a Soviet willingness to take increased risks (e.g., by threatening unilateral military intervention in the Middle East in October 1973, and supporting the Angola adventure) may well represent harbingers of what lies ahead.

Soviet doctrine, confirmed by the actions of its leadership over many decades has emphasized—and continues to emphasize—two important points: the first is unflagging persistence and patience in using the available means favorably to mold all aspects of the correlation of forces (social, psychological, political, economic and military) so as to strengthen themselves and to weaken any prospective challengers to their power; the second is closely to evaluate the evolving correlation of forces and to act in accordance with that evaluation. When the correlation is unfavorable, the Party should act with great caution and confuse the enemy in order to gain time to take actions necessary to reverse trends in the correlation of forces. When the correlation of forces is favorable, the Party is under positive obligation to take those actions necessary to realize and nail down potential gains, lest the correlation of forces subsequently change to a less favorable position. (It is noteworthy that in recent months one of the major themes emphasized in statements by the Soviet leadership to internal audiences urges the "realization" of the advances brought about by the favorable evolution of forces resulting from detente and the positive shift in the military balance.)

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We are impressed by the scope and intensity of Soviet military and related programs (e.g., proliferation and hardening of its command, control and communications network and civil defense). The size and nature of the Soviet effort which involves considerable economic and political costs and risks, if long continued in the face of frustrated economic expectations within their own bloc and the possibility that the West may come to perceive the necessity of reversing current trends

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before they become irreversible, lead to the possibility of a relatively short term threat cresting, say, in 1980 to 1983, as well as the more obvious long range threat.

The draft NIE's do not appear to take any such shorter range threat seriously and do not indicate that the threat itself, or its possible timing, have been examined with the care which we believe the subject deserves.

Although in the past two years the NIEs have taken a more realistic view of the Soviet military buildup, and even conceded the possibility that its ultimate objective may well exceed the requirements of deterrence, they still incline to play down the Soviet commitment to a war-winning capability. Three additional factors (beside those mentioned above) may account for this attitude:

1. Political pressures and considerations. On some occasions the drafters of NIE display an evident inclination to minimize the Soviet strategic buildup because of its implications for detente, SAL negotiations, congressional sentiments as well as for certain U.S. forces. This is not to say that any of the judgments which seem to reflect policy support are demonstrably directed judgments: rather they appear to derive mainly from a strong and understandable awareness on the part of the NIE authors of the policy issues at stake.

2. Inter-agency rivalry. Some members of Team "B" feel that the inclination of the NIEs to downplay military threats is in significant measure due to bureaucratic rivalry between the military and civilian intelligence agencies; the latter, being in control of the NIE language, have a reputation for tempering the pessimistic views of military intelligence with more optimistic judgments.

3. The habit of viewing each Soviet weapons' program, or other development, in isolation from the others. The NIEs tend to assess each Soviet development as in and of itself, even when it is evident that the Russians are pursuing a variety of means to attain the same objective. As a result, with each individual development minimized or dismissed as being in itself of no decisive importance, the cumulative effect of the buildup is missed.

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Analyses carried out by members of Team "B" (and presented in Part Two of this Report) of NIE treatments of certain key features of the Soviet strategic effort indicate the extent to which faulty method and biases of an institutional nature affect its evaluations. This holds true of the NIE treatment of Soviet strategic offensive forces (ICBMs

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and SLBMs); of its views of the alleged economic constraints on Soviet strategic forces; of its assessment of Soviet civil defense and military hardening programs; of its interpretation of the strategic implications of Soviet mobile missiles and the Backfire bomber; of its evaluation of Soviet R&D in the fields of anti-submarine, anti-satellite, and anti-ballistic missile defenses; and of its perception of Soviet non-central nuclear systems. In each instance it was found that through NIE 11-3/8-75, the NIEs have tended (though not in the same degree) to minimize the seriousness and success of the respective Soviet efforts, and (by the injection of *de facto* net assessments) to downgrade the threat which they pose to U.S. security.

In formulating its own estimate of Soviet strategic objectives, Team "B" divided it into two aspects: objectives in the broad, "grand strategic" sense, as they are perceived by the Soviet leader-ship; and objectives in the more narrow, military sense, as defined by NIE 11-3/8.

As concerns the first, Team "B" agreed that all the evidence points to an undeviating Soviet commitment to what is euphemistically called "the worldwide triumph of socialism" but in fact connotes global Soviet hegemony. Soviet actions give no grounds on which to dismiss this objective as rhetorical exhortation, devoid of operative meaning. The risks consequent to the existence of strategic nuclear weapons have not altered this ultimate objective, although they have influenced the strategy employed to pursue it. "Peaceful coexistence" (better known in the West as detente) is a grand strategy adapted to the age of nuclear weapons. It entails a twin thrust: (1) stress on all sorts of political, economic, ideological, and other non-military instrumentalities to penetrate and weaken the "capitalist" zone, while at the same time strengthening Russia's hold on the "socialist" camp; and (2) an intense military buildup in nuclear as well as conventional forces of all sorts, not moderated either by the West's self-imposed restraints or by SALT.

In its relations with the United States, which it views as the central bastion of the enemy camp, the Soviet leadership has had as its main intermediate goals America's isolation from its allies as well as the separation of the OECD nations from the Third World, which, it believes, will severely undermine "capitalism's" political, economic, and ultimately, military might.

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With regard to China, while the spectre of a two-front war and intense ideological competition have to an inportant degree limited the Soviet Union's freedom of action in pursuance of their goals against the West, it has not proved an unlimited or insuperable limitation. Further,

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given current trends in the growth of Soviet military power, the U.S. cannot confidently anticipate that concern with China will deter the USSR from increasingly aggressive policies toward the West.

As concerns the more narrowly defined military strategic objectives, Team "B" feels the USSR *strives for effective strategic superiority in all the branches of the military, nuclear forces included.* For historic reasons, as well as for reasons inherent in the Soviet system, the Soviet leadership places unusual reliance on coercion as a regular instrument of policy at home as well as abroad. It likes to have a great deal of coercive capability at its disposal at all times, and it likes for it to come in a rich mix so that it can be optimally structured for any contingency that may arise. After some apparent division of opinion intermittently in the 1960's, the Soviet leadership seems to have concluded that nuclear war could be fought and won. The scope and vigor of Soviet strategic programs leave little reasonable doubt that Soviet leaders are indeed determined to achieve the maximum possible measure of strategic superiority over the U.S. Their military doctrine is measured not in Western terms of assured destruction but in those of a *war-fighting and war-winning capability;* it also posits a clear and substantial Soviet predominance following a general nuclear conflict. We believe that the Russians place a high priority on the attainment of such a capability and that they may feel that it is within their grasp. If, however, that capability should not prove attainable, they intend to secure so substantial a nuclear war-fighting advantage that, as a last resort, they would *be less deterred than we from initiating the use of nuclear weapons.* In this context, both detente and SALT are seen by Soviet leaders not as cooperative efforts to ensure global peace, but as means more effectively to compete with the United States.

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PART ONE

JUDGMENTS ABOUT SOVIET STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES UNDERLYING NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES AND THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THESE JUDGMENTS

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PART ONE

JUDGMENTS ABOUT SOVIET STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES UNDERLYING NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATES AND THE SHORTCOMINGS OF THESE JUDGMENTS

1. *Influence of Intelligence Gathering Techniques on the Perception of Soviet Objectives*

The National Intelligence Estimates concerning the USSR are essentially assessments of Soviet military capabilities which, in the main, are based on data gathered by means of highly sophisticated optical and listening devices. Because the Soviet Union remains a uniquely closed society, human contacts, traditionally the principal source of foreign intelligence, play a distinctly subordinate role in the preparation of these documents: not only is such information exceedingly scarce, but it is always suspect of being the product of a deliberate disinformation effort in which the Soviet government engages on a massive scale. Furthermore, information obtained from sensitive human sources often has such limited distribution that it does not play a significant part in the preparation of NIEs. Thus it happens that the hard evidence on which the NIEs are based relates primarily to the adversary's capabilities rather than his intentions, his weapons rather than his ideas, motives, and aspirations.

The particular nature of the intelligence-gathering process exerts an important influence on the manner in which Soviet strategic objectives are assessed in the NIEs: we have here an instance of technology turning from tool into master. Because the hard evidence is so overwhelmingly physical (material) in nature, the tendency of the intelligence community is to focus on questions of *what* rather than *why* or *what for.* Problems of capabilities overshadow those of Soviet purpose. As a consequence, the NIEs either gloss over in silence the question of Soviet strategic objectives, or else treat the matter in a perfunctory manner. Judging by the available evidence, it seems that the intelligence community has spent more effort and produced more literature on each and every Soviet ICBM system than on the whole overriding question of why it is that the USSR develops such a strategic nulcear posture in the first place.

To gloss over Soviet purpose, however, does not mean to be rid of the issue: excluded from the front entrance, it has a way of slipping through the back door. The point is that whether one wants to or not, in assessing the enemy's capabilities one must of necessity make some kind of judgments about his objectives, or else the raw data are of no use. Facts of themselves are mute: they are like the scattered letters of an alphabet that the reader must arrange in sequence according to some system. The difference is only whether one arrives at one's judgments about an adversary's objectives consciously and openly, i.e., spells them out, or unconsciously. As a rule, whenever the latter course is taken, one's judgments tend to be drawn from simplistic "projections" of one's own values and aspirations. For unless we are prepared to acknowledge that our adversary is "different" and unless we are willing to make the mental effort required to understand him on his own terms, we have no choice but to fall back on the only alternate position available, namely the postulate that his basic motivation resembles ours. The result is that well-known phenomenon, "mirror-imaging", the persistent flaw of the NIEs bearing on the USSR, a flaw which may be said to constitute the principal source of their unsatisfactory assessments of Soviet objectives. In other words, the disinclination, in no small part induced by the scientific-technical character of intelligence gathering about the USSR, to face squarely the issue of objectives (which does not lend

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itself to conventional scientific or technical analysis) encourages the authors of the NIEs to adopt a set of questionable assumptions about Russian intentions. These assumptions, in turn, lead to the formulation of judgments about Soviet intentions which are not supported by the available evidence, and, indeed, sometimes stand in stark contradiction to it. Thus, overemphasis on "hard" data and the failure to draw on other sources of information with the same degree of conviction all too often causes the information supplied by the "hard" data to be misinterpreted. In the opinion of Team "B", *the NIEs are filled with unsupported and questionable judgments about what it is that the Soviet government wants and intends. It is this practice, rather than the absence of solid information, that has caused in the past (and in considerable measure does so in the present) recurrent underestimations of the intensity, scope, and implicit threat of the Soviet strategic buildup.*

2. *Implicit NIE Assumptions and Judgments About Soviet International Behavior*

The unspoken assumptions of the U.S. intelligence community (and, one may add, much of the U.S. political, intellectual, and business communities as well) about Soviet international behavior derive from several sources, which can be briefly identified as follows:

a. The U.S. commercial tradition and the business culture which permeates U.S. society; among their components are the beliefs that (1) peace and the pursuit of profit are "normal" whereas war is always an aberration; (2) in relations between parties both should enjoy a share of the profits; and, (3) human nature everywhere is the same, by and large corresponding to the rationalist, utilitarian model devised by Jeremy Bentham and his followers.

b. A democratic tradition which regards social equality as "natural" and elitism of any sort as aberrant.

c. An insular tradition derived from the fact that until two decades ago, when the Russians deployed their first ICBMs, the USA had enjoyed total immunity from a strategic threat to its territory.

These three traditions—commercial, democratic, and insular—have imbued the United States with a unique outlook on the world, an outlook that is shared by no other nation, least of all by the Russians whose historic background is vastly different. It is a world outlook *sui generis* and yet nevertheless one which deeply colors the intelligence community's perceptions of the motives and aspirations of the USSR.

As one reads the NIEs issued over the past fifteen years, one finds underlying their assessments a whole set of *unspoken assumptions* about Russian national character and goals *that in all essential respects corresponds to the idealized image the United States has of itself but bears very little resemblance to anything that actually relates to Soviet Russia.*

A. *NIE Conception of Soviet Strategy*

To begin with, the key word, the adjective "strategic," The Soviet conception of "strategic," is much broader than that covered by NIE 11-3/8. Russia is a continental power not an insular one, and it happens to have the longest external frontier of any country in the world. In contrast to the United States, it has never enjoyed the luxury of isolation, having always been engaged in conflict along its frontier, sometimes suffering devastating invasions, sometimes being the aggressor who absorbed entire countries lying along its borders. For a country with this kind of a historic background it would make little sense to separate any category of military weapons, no matter how destructive, from the rest of the arsenal of the means of persuasion and coercion.* The strategic threat to the homeland (i.e., the ability of an enemy to inflict "unacceptable" human and material losses) is for the Soviet Union nothing new, and the danger presented by strategic nuclear weapons, grave though it may be, does not call for a qualitative departure from the norms of traditional military thinking.

There is also a further factor which militates against the Russians' thinking of strategic weapons in the same way as do the Americans. In the United States, the military are not considered an active factor in the political life of the country, war itself is viewed as abnormal, and the employment of weapons of mass destruction as something entirely outside the norms of policy. The Soviet Union, by contrast, functions as a giant conglomerate in which military, political, and

* It is true, of course, that the Russians have created a separate branch of the armed forces, the Strategic Rocket Forces. This is an administrative device, however, which does not signify that they regard such forces as unique and fundamentally different from the army, navy, or air force.

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economic institutions—and the instruments appropriate to each of them—are seen as part of a diversified arsenal of power, all administered by the same body of men and all usable for purposes of persuasion and coercion. The distinction between the civilian and the military sectors of society and economy, appropriate to capitalist societies, is not very meaningful in the Soviet environment. *All of which means, that in the USSR military weapons in general, and strategic nuclear weapons in particular, are treated not as unique instruments to be used as a very last resort, but as elements of a whole range of mutually supporting means of persuasion and coercion available to the state in pursuit of its interests.*

The Soviet conception of strategy resembles that which in Western literature is sometimes referred to as "grand strategy": it entails the application of *all* the available resources in the pursuit of national objectives. Soviet military theory is decidedly Clausewitzian in orientation. In Soviet strategic writings, the point is made with monotonous emphasis that military actions are subordinate to politics, and have no function outside of politics. The following passage is a fair example of this kind of argument:

> The organic unity of military strategy and policy with the determining role of the latter signifies that military strategy proceeds from policy, is determined by policy, is totally dependent on policy, and accomplishes its specific tasks only within the framework of policy . . .*

The distinction between the American and Soviet conceptions of strategic force is well reflected in the criteria which the two sides employ in assessing the power relationship between potential adversaries. The American concept of "strategic balance" concentrates almost exclusively on military forces, whereas the Soviet concept of "correlation of forces" (*sootnoshenie sil*) includes in the equation also such non-military factors as political power, economic capacity, social cohesion, morale, and so forth.

By adopting in its estimates of Soviet strategic objectives the narrow American definition of what constitutes strategy and a strategic threat instead of the broad Clausewitzian one, the NIEs 11-3/8 have no choice but to ignore weapons other than nuclear ones in the Soviet strategic arsenal.* They grossly underemphasize the connections between the political, military, economic, and ideological elements in Soviet foreign policy. By singling out for near exclusive treatment the three components of the Triad, they not only leave out of consideration other nuclear and non-nuclear military means but also a whole range of strategic weapons of a non-military kind which the Soviet leadership sees as available to it in the pursuit of world politics. And yet in Soviet eyes such actions as the interdiction of the Western flow of oil supplies or the disruption of the democratic processes by Communist parties may well be perceived as "strategic" moves equal in importance to the deployment of the latest series of ICBMs.

B. NIE Assumptions and Judgments About Soviet Strategic Objectives

Much the same "mirror-imaging" holds true when we turn from the NIEs' perception of what constitutes a "strategic threat" to their view of Soviet "strategic objectives." Here we find a rather mechanistic projection onto Soviet society of the sentiments and aspirations of a society which sees war as an unmitigated evil and the military as a social overhead to be curtailed whenever possible, a society which conceives the purpose of organized life to be the steady improvement of the citizen's living standards. These views are never spelled out in so many words: nevertheless, they unmistakably underpin the NIEs evaluations of what it is that the Russians aim at.

Much of U.S. analysis of Soviet military programs and actions is based on granting excessive legitimacy to an alleged Russian obsession with national security derived of experience with foreign invasions and interventions.** Soviet Russia's relentless drive to enlarge and improve its military power, its impulsive reaction to any moves that threaten its territory, its overriding concern with obtaining international recog-

* This tendency is aggravated by the compartmentalization of the analysis of enemy capabilities by the intelligence community which originally separated strategic offensive weapons from strategic defensive weapons, and both from theatre tactical capabilities. This compartmentalization persists in various forms up to this day.

** See e.g., General George S. Brown's *United States Military Posture for FY 1977* where the following phrase occurs: "The Soviet historical experience of war, invasion, revolution, foreign intervention and hostility has produced strong anxiety concerning national security." (p. 8)

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nition of its post-world War II conquests—all of this is attributed to historically-induced national insecurities.

This basic assumption, strongly (though indirectly) reflected in the NIEs, has a number of important corollaries:

(1) That Soviet military policy is first and foremost *defensive* in character. This view is explicitly conveyed in NIE 11-4-72 (*Issues and Options in Soviet Military Policy*), one of the few intelligence publications which addresses itself seriously to Soviet strategic objectives in the context of "grand strategy":

> "Certain broad aims of Soviet foreign policy can . . . be described today in much the same way as a decade or more ago: (a) *security* of the homeland and of the world communist "center"; (b) *protection* of the "gains of socialism" and more specifically *maintenance* of loyal Communist regimes in eastern Europe; (c) fostering *awareness* everywhere of Soviet military strength and readiness so as to support a strong foreign policy aimed at expanding Soviet *influence*". (p. 5; emphasis supplied).*

The possibility that the Russians may be pursuing not a defensive but an offensive strategy is not entertained in the NIEs: the spread of Soviet "influence" (which can also mean the use of peaceful means) is as far as they are prepared to go in that direction. Apparently, the issue is discounted as not meriting serious thought. In line with this assumption, the whole immense Soviet buildup of nuclear strategic weapons is seen as serving primarily defensive purposes. A document called *Soviet Nuclear Doctrine: Concepts of Intercontinental and Theater War,* issued by the Office of Strategic Research in June 1973, flatly asserts that the Russians perceive their nuclear forces as serving essentially defensive aims: "The major effort has been on programs which ensure the ability of strategic forces to absorb a U.S. strike and still return a devastating blow" (p. 3). Here, too, the possibility of the Russians using their strategic weapons for offensive purposes is ignored. Indeed, the very possibility of nuclear war is rejected, for which reason the NIEs tend to disregard evidence that suggests the Russians view the matter differently.

(2) Consistently with this perception of Soviet defensive objectives, the Soviet Union is seen as being interested primarily in securing an effective deterrence force: "Deterrence is a key objective."* Moreover, deterrence is regarded as an end goal and, as in Western thinking, as something fundamentally different from war-fighting capability and strategic superiority. Proceeding from this premise, the NIEs have notoriously underestimated both the intensity and scope of the Soviet commitment to a strategic nuclear buildup. NIE 11-8-64 (p. 2) went on record as stating that there was no reason to believe that the USSR desired to match the United States in the number of ICBMs. By 1967-68 the NIEs conceded that the Russians might perhaps be aiming at strategic parity with the United States. Only in 1974-75, however, was the possibility of the Russians seeking advantage and superiority over the United States advanced as a serious contingency.**

(3) Once the Soviet Union has attained parity with the United States and assured itself of an effective deterrent, it will not wish to continue the arms race. As they gain strength, the Russians will also acquire self-confidence and therefore cease to feel the need to flex their muscles to impress potential enemies: the acquisition of military might will make the Soviet Union aware that the "contest for international primacy has become increasingly complicated and less amenable to simple projections of power." (NIE 11-4-72, p. 1). The Soviet Union will turn into a stabilizing force in international affairs and shift an increasing share of its resources from the military to the civilian sector ("The Soviet leadership would no doubt prefer to shift some scarce resources . . . to the civilian sector," NIE 11-4-72, p. 1).

(4) Because its preoccupation is with defense, in its military effort the Soviet Union mainly responds to initiatives of its potential rivals, especially the United

* A similar view of Soviet military policy, i.e., as inherently defensive is advanced in NIE 11-3/8-75 Vol. II, Paragraph 40, pp. 10-11, and NIE 11-14-75 (p. 2). The latter, for instance, says: "The USSR considers its military strength in Europe to be fundamental to the *protection* of its national interests, to the *maintenance* of its strategic posture vis-a-vis the West, and to its management of foreign policy" (Emphasis supplied). The National Intelligence Estimates bearing on the Soviet Navy (e.g., NIE 11-15-74, *Soviet Naval Policy and Programs—Annexes,* p. A-4) also tend, on the whole, to see Soviet naval buildups in defensive rather than offensive terms.

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* *Soviet Nuclear Doctrine: Concepts of Intercontinental and Theater War,*

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** The NIE record in regard to Soviet strategic objectives is discussed at greater length in the Annex.

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States. Its strategic moves are reactive in character and opportunistic rather than self-generated or long term in conception.

(5) Given the obsession with national security and the fact that its military arsenal serves primarily defensive purposes, the United States can watch without alarm the Soviet effort to attain military parity. The attainment of such parity will provide the Russians with the sense of confidence necessary for them to decelerate the arms buildup.

(6) The Russians would admittedly not be averse to gaining strategic superiority over the United States if they thought this goal feasible. However, until very recently the authors of NIE regarded such an objective to be unrealistic and they did not allow that Soviet leaders could seriously entertain it (e.g., "We believe that the USSR has concluded that the attainment of clear superiority in strategic weapons . . . is not now feasible": NIE 11-72, *Soviet Foreign Policies and the Outlook for Soviet-American Objectives*, p. 2; no evidence supporting this contention is given in this or any other document). Only very recently has the mass of data which suggests that the USSR may not be content with mere parity and mutual deterrence become so compelling as to force the NIE to concede that the Soviet Union could indeed possess more ambitious goals: "the scope and vigor of these [strategic] programs" says NIE 11-3/8-75 (p. 5), "at a time when the USSR has achieved a powerful deterrent as well as recognition as the strategic equal of the U.S., raise the elusive question of whether the Soviet leaders embrace as an objective some form of strategic nuclear superiority over the U.S." This qualified admission, after years of stress on the purely defensive character of Soviet strategic objectives, is gratifying, even though the NIE still tends to disparage the importance of such superiority and, refuses to acknowledge that it can be militarily meaningful. The prevailing tone of the NIE all along has been to view Soviet policy as one of prudent opportunism. The Russians are seen as unwilling to take high risks or to make any moves that might provoke the United States, on whose good will they are believed to place extremely high value.

(7) Soviet military doctrine and the official pronouncements of Soviet leaders which seem to indicate a more aggressive stance, as, for example, when they speak of "socialist" (read: Soviet) world hegemony, need not be taken too seriously. While some intelligence analysts apparently do attach considerable significance to Soviet doctrinal pronouncements, the consensus reflected in NIEs holds that Soviet doctrine is primarily exhortative in character and possesses little if any operative significance. Its main function is to serve domestic politics, for which reason it represents a kind of Soviet counterpart to U.S. campaign oratory.

It is not difficult to perceive that the picture of Soviet motivations and intentions as implicitly or (less frequently) explicitly drawn in the NIEs is one which in all respects but one—namely, the acknowledgement of an abiding, historically-conditioned and extreme sense of national insecurity—is like that of the United States. The Soviet Union is seen as defensive-minded, concerned with securing merely an effective deterrence, preferring to shift the competition with the United States to other than military arenas so as to be able to transfer resources to the civilian sector, and lacking in any strategic objectives apart from those that are forced upon it by the United States and other potential adversaries. Superiority is something the Russians would not scorn if the United States were to allow them to gain it; but by the very nature of things, it is not an objective they can actively pursue, the more so that strategic superiority in the nuclear age is something of a phantom. The Russians indeed do display opportunistic proclivities but they are above all prudent, cautious, and conservative.

These assumptions permeate the analyses presented in the National Intelligence Estimates and often lead to quite unwarranted assessments. Examples of such procedures are given in Part Two of this Report which indicates how, partly by virtue of "mirror-imaging," and partly as a result of firmly held convictions about what it is the Russians must or ought to want, hard data are interpreted in a manner that closer scrutiny reveals to be at best questionable and at worst palpably unsound.

3. Critique of these assumptions

The point is that these assumptions do not stand up to scrutiny in the light of Soviet history, Soviet doctrine, and Soviet actions.

(1) To begin with, the tendency to view "insecurity" as the motor force propelling Soviet foreign and military policies. Although undoubtedly the desire to protect the homeland is a factor in

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Russian behavior, it does not lead to a defensive posture in the ordinary meaning of the word: the Russians construe their own security in the sense that it can be assured only at the expense of their neighbors. This leads to an essentially aggressive rather than defensive approach to security. And in fact, Russian, and especially Soviet political and military theories are distinctly *offensive* in character: their ideal is the "science of conquest" (*nauka pobezhdat'*) formulated by the 18th Century Russian commander, Field Marshall A. V. Suvorov in a treatise of the same name, which has been a standard text of Imperial as well as Soviet military science.

There are valid reasons why Soviet political and military thinking should be offensive.

A. As a matter of the historical record, it is untrue that Russia has suffered an exceptional number of invasions and interventions: it has probably done more invading itself. The expansion of Russia as a continental empire is without parallel in world history: no country has grown so fast and none has held on so tenaciously to its conquests. It is no accident that Russia alone of all the belligerents has emerged from World War II larger than it had entered it. As concerns the celebrated interventions of the West in the Russian Revolution, most of what is said on this subject is myth pure and simple: suffice it to say that except on rare occasions Western troops did not actively fight the Red Army; that their intervention was a response to Soviet intervention in western politics (the call to class war and the overthrow of the existing governments); and that the net effect of U.S. intervention in the Russian Civil War has been to save Eastern Siberia for Russia from certain Japanese conquest. In other words, the Russian "right" to be obsessively concerned with security is a misconception based on a one-sided reading of history; indeed, if anyone has a right to be obsessed with security it is Russia's neighbors. It is really not surprising that "insecurity" plays a far lesser part in Russian thinking or psychology than is normally attributed to it. The Russian outlook, where politics and military affairs are concerned, has traditionally been confident and aggressive rather than anxious and defensive. Hence there is no reason to assume that the growth of military might will assuage the Russian appetite for expansion: the opposite proposition is far more plausible—*the stronger they are and feel, the more likely are they to behave aggressively.*

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B. There are also internal reasons which push the Soviet leadership toward an offensive stance:

The great importance which Soviet political theory attaches to the sense of forward movement: the lack of any kind of genuine legitimacy on the part of the Soviet government compels it to create its own pseudo-legitimacy which rests on an alleged "mandate of history" and is said to manifest itself in a relentless spread of the "socialist" cause around the globe;

Connected with it, the attitude that in political, military, and ideological contests it is essential always to seize and hold the initiative;

Lack of confidence in the loyalty of the population (a World War II experience), especially where East Europe is concerned, and the fear of massive defections to the enemy in the event of prolonged defensive operations;

The better ability of the regime to exercise control over military commanders (as well as over the civilian population) in pre-planned, offensive operations, than under conditions where the initiative is left to the opponent;

The traumatic experience of the first few months of the Russo-German War of 1941-45, when a sudden Nazi onslaught caused immense Soviet losses in manpower and territory, and almost cost the Russians the war; the experiences of war in the Middle East in 1967 and 1973 have reinforced the belief of Soviet military in the value of decisive offensive action;

The conviction that in the nuclear age the decisive blows will be struck in the first hours of the conflict, and hence he who waits to strike second is almost certain to lose.

(2) There is no evidence either in their theoretical writings or in their actions that Soviet leaders have embraced the U.S. doctrine of mutual assured destruction or any of its corollaries. Neither nuclear stability, nor strategic sufficiency, nor "parity," play any noticeable role in Soviet military thinking. The Russians seem to have come to regard strategic nuclear weapons as weapons of unique capacity whose introduction has indeed profoundly affected military strategy, but which, in the ultimate analysis, are still means of persuasion and coercion and as such to be employed or not employed, as the situation dictates.

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They regard nuclear war as feasible and (as indicated below in Parts Two and Three) take many active steps to attain a capability to wage and win such a war. The attainment of nuclear parity with the United States has served only to strengthen their view of the matter. True, Khrushchev in the early 1960s, and for several years thereafter various spokesmen from Soviet institutes, appeared to accept mutual deterrence as a concrete fact in the face of U. S. strategic superiority and the then bleak prospects for the USSR to reverse that situation. These indications of serious internal consideration of Western concepts of nuclear balance disappeared as prospects for meaningful Soviet strategic superiority improved, although Soviet spokesmen continued to suggest to Western audiences that nuclear war could be mutually destructive. In any event there is no evidence that Soviet planners have adopted the essentials of U.S. strategic thinking with its linchpin, the theory of nuclear sufficiency: indeed, all the available evidence points to their deliberate and steadfast rejection of such Western concepts.

(3) There is no reason to assume that the Soviet leadership, like its U.S. counterpart, regards military expenditures as a waste and wishes to reduce the military budget in order to be able to shift resources to the civilian sector. For one, the priority enjoyed by the Soviet military seems unchallengeable. Secondly, the sharp civilian-military duality, basic to our society, does not exist in the USSR; hence, the Soviet military budget is not clearly differentiated from the civilian one. The reduction of Soviet military expenditures by so many billion rubles would not automatically release resources for the civilian population. Finally, it is unwarranted to assume *a priori* that the Soviet leadership is eager significantly to raise its population's living standards. The ability to mobilize the population not only physically but also spiritually is regarded by the Soviet leadership as essential to any successful war effort. Having had ample opportunity to observe post-1945 developments in the West, the Soviet leaders seem to have concluded that a population addicted to the pursuit of consumer goods rapidly loses its sense of patriotism, sinking into a mood of self-indulgence that makes it extremely poor material for national mobilization. There is every reason to believe—on the basis of both the historic record and the very logic of the Soviet system—that the Soviet regime is essentially uninterested in a significant rise of its population's living standards, at any rate in the foreseeable future. Certainly, the prospect of acquiring additional resources for the civilian sector is for it no inducement for a reduction of the arms buildup.

(4) While the Soviet Union obviously, and for good reasons, keeps a very close watch on U.S. strategic developments, and, when necessary, adopts appropriate defensive countermeasures, there is no evidence that its long-term strategic planning is *primarily* influenced by what the United States or any other power happens to do. The Soviet Union is pursuing its own long term global objectives, doing all that is necessary to safeguard the home base, but without allowing the requirements of defense substantially to alter its offensive objectives. It is striking, for example, how little attention is paid in Soviet military literature (both open and classified) to SALT. In contrast to the United States, where strategic arms limitation is regarded as a central element in the development of the U.S.-USSR strategic balance, in Soviet literature SALT is treated as a minor sideshow without much influence on the overall strategic competition. Attention must also be called to the Soviet Union's response to what it must have perceived as the greatest threat to its security since the end of World War II, namely the conflict with China. Instead of depleting its Warsaw Pact forces to confront the Chinese threat, the Soviet Union proceeded in the 1960's to build up a powerful and substantially new military force on the Far Eastern front, thereby once again demonstrating that it does not intend actions by others to interrupt or deflect its own long term strategic planning.

(5) Since, as we have pointed out, the decisive motive in Soviet political and military thinking is not a defensive but an offensive spirit, the assumption that *growing Soviet strength will cause them to become less aggressive is unwarranted.*

(6) It is certainly true that the Russians have been prudent and generally cautious, and that they have avoided rash military adventures of the kind that had characterized nationalist-revolutionary ("fascist") regimes of the 1930's. As the record indicates, whenever they have been confronted with situations that threatened to lead to U.S.-USSR military confrontations, they preferred to withdraw, even at the price of some humiliation. The reason for this cautious behavior, however, lies not in an innate conservatism, but rather in military inferiority, for which reason one cannot count on it recurring as that inferiority

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disappears. The Russians have a strongly developed sense of power relationships, of the equation of total power between adversaries, which they call the "correlation of forces." They believe that one's means should always match one's objectives, and hence that one should never engage oneself fully (i.e., without retaining a possibility of timely withdrawal) unless there is very high certainty that the correlation of forces is so favorable as to ensure success. (Their theorists claim, with unconcealed scorn, that "bourgeois" leaders habitually underestimate the strength of their opponents, rushing headlong into hopeless "adventures".) Whenever they feel that the correlation of forces is strongly in their favor, their doctrine calls on them to act decisively and with vigor. It may, therefore, be assumed that in proportion as the USSR gains strength and perceives the global "correlation of forces" shifting in its favor, it will act in a manner that *in our definition* will be *less* cautious.

(7) The internal pronouncements of Soviet civilian and military leaders concerning national objectives should on no account be dismissed as empty rhetoric. In authoritarian states, the will of individuals takes (by definition) the place of laws, for which reason formal pronouncements of the leader or leaders acquire quite a different significance and fulfill quite different functions from those they have in countries where governments are elected popularly and operate in accord with constitutional mandates. Communist rulers simply cannot say for internal consumption things which are significantly different from what they actually mean, or else they risk disorienting their subjects and disorganizing their administrations. (To the extent that they make contrary statements in private and "off the record" to Westerners, they can be assumed to have the purpose of influencing foreign public opinion.) One must bear in mind that the decisions of the Soviet leadership, as officially enunciated, are filtered down to the masses by means of a vast and well-organized *agitprop* machinery, and are understood by the population at large to be formal directives. Nowhere can "mirror-imaging" be more deadly than in the treatment of Soviet pronouncements with that cynicism with which we are accustomed to respond to our own electoral rhetoric.

4. Conclusion

If we juxtapose the implicit and explicit assumptions of NIEs about the Soviet mentality and Soviet strategic objectives with what history, the exigencies of the Soviet system, and the pronouncements of Soviet leaders indicate, we are not surprised that *the NIEs consistently underestimate the significance of the Soviet strategic effort.* All Soviet actions in this field tend to be interpreted in the light of a putative sense of insecurity; aggressive intentions are dismissed out of hand. It is our belief that the NIEs' tendency to underestimate the Russian strategic drive stems ultimately from three causes: (1) an unwillingness to contemplate Soviet strategic objectives in terms of the Soviet conception of "strategy" as well as in the light of Soviet history, the structure of Soviet society, and the pronouncements of Soviet leaders; (2) an unconscious (and related) tendency to view the USSR as a country whose basic strategic objectives are limited to an assured defense of the home country, and (3) the resultant tendency to ignore or misinterpret evidence that points to different conclusions. In other words, such misjudgments as have been committed and to some extent continue to be committed are due not so much to the lack of evidence as *to the absence of a realistic overall conception of Soviet motives and intentions, without which the significance of such evidence as exists cannot be properly assessed.*

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PART TWO

A CRITIQUE OF NIE INTERPRETATIONS OF CERTAIN SOVIET STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS

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PART TWO

A CRITIQUE OF NIE INTERPRETATIONS OF CERTAIN SOVIET STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS

FOREWORD

This section presents summary analyses of specific aspects of Soviet strategic force developments which, in the opinion of Team B, NIEs have underestimated or treated too lightly in estimating the Soviet threat to U.S. security. We have not attempted in this section to cover the sweep of Soviet strategic programs either comprehensively or in depth. The summary analyses, are meant to be representative of the Team's review of developments that have contributed to its conclusions as to Soviet strategic objectives. The papers make the following principal points:

1. *Soviet ICBM and SLBM programs* reflect strategic objectives and a determination more ominous for U.S. security in both political and military terms than the NIEs acknowledge.

2. *Economic Restraints on Soviet Strategic Forces:* Consistent low estimates of the Soviet defense burden combined with overestimates of economic constraints have contributed to the NIE underestimation of Soviet strategic weapon programs and have tended to offset in the readers' minds concern for the growth of Soviet military capabilities: Soviet strategic force developments have yet to reflect any constraining effects of competition from the civil sector of the economy.

3. *Soviet Civil Defense.* Soviet civil defense efforts have been either downgraded or ignored in the NIEs, mirror-imaging a U.S. consensus that such defenses lack strategic utility: in fact, Soviet civil defense efforts appear to be integrated with all other military programs to maximize Russia's capabilities to fight a nuclear war and emerge viable from it.

4. *Military Hardening:* The extensive hardening program connected with Soviet command and control clearly demonstrates Soviet intent to achieve a true war fighting capability, as opposed to acceptance of a mutual deterrence concept.

5. *Mobile Missiles:* The Soviets intend to produce substantial numbers of SS-20 missiles which use the same two-stage and ground-handling equipment as does the SS-16 intercontinental mobile missile; the NIEs do not address themselves to the Soviet potential of altering the strategic balance by quickly converting the SS-20 to ICBM's with the addition of the third stage.

6. *Backfire:* The Backfire clearly possesses intercontinental capability which means that if deployed in significant numbers it would pose an incremental threat to the strategic balance.

7. *Soviet Anti-Satellite Testing:* There is stronger evidence than suggested by the NIEs of a Soviet determination to develop anti-satellite systems having high military value across the spectrum of conflict, and it is likely that in the foreseeable future the Russians will couple their anti-satellite system development with developments of directed energy weapons.

8. *Soviet Strategic ASW:* The uncharacteristically strong negative long-range estimate of the NIEs disparaging the possibility of successful Soviet development of ASW capabilities is challengeable technically and if wrong, could have profound implications for U.S. security.

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9. *ABM including Directed Energy R&D:* The evidence does not support an indisputable conclusion that the Soviets have either lost interest in their ABM effort or downgraded it.

10. *Soviet Non-Central Nuclear Systems:* The omission from the Estimates of any treatment of Soviet non-central systems, and their relegation to occasional and rather perfunctory treatment in other estimates on "peripheral" forces, produces a picture of the strategic balance seriously at variance with the Soviets' own view and minimizes the extent of their buildup.

1. Soviet Central Strategic Attack Systems

As broad and diversified as the Soviet strategic drive has been, the core of the intercontinental attack force effort has been the amassing and continual improvement of modern ICBM and SSBN/SLBM forces.

Estimating History *

NIE Projections during the 1960s of Soviet ICBM and SLBM forces consistently underestimated their growth, the variety of programs, qualitative improvements and force capabilities, and the intensity and determination of the Soviet effort. In the mid 1960s, even after the observed start of the SS-11, SS-9, and Yankee SSBN programs, NIEs did not forecast any very large scale or determined buildup of ICBM and SLBM forces. The judgment was simply: "We do not believe that the USSR aims at matching the United States" in these intercontinental systems. The Soviets were depicted as resigned to or even satisfied with a position of inferiority, and their objectives limited to a minimal but adequate retaliatory deterrent force. Not until NIE 11-8-68 was it projected that "the Soviets will shortly overcome the U.S. lead in numbers of ICBM launchers" (not SLBM), and by then a U.S.-style arms control and limitation rationale was attributed to the Soviets in a way to place presumed limits on further growth and development.

Later NIEs, at the start of the 1970s, as the number of fixed ICBM silo launchers was levelling off, disparaged the Soviet effort to gain ostentatious superiority and to develop ICBM and SLBM forces guided by real warfighting criteria. Instead, the goals of these programs were stressed in terms of "rough parity" and "equal security." Even after NIE 11-8-73 had acknowledged that Soviet ICBM and SLBM programs were not "readily explained as merely trying to keep up with the competition," mutual assured destruction reasoning dominated the estimates, as did a conviction that the Soviets would willingly limit these programs meaningfully in pursuit of SALT, strategic stability, and detente.

By the 1973-1975 NIEs, the Soviet ICBM and SLBM efforts in general were more accurately represented as "a vigorous and costly buildup," with rapid qualitative improvement, but progress made in improving ICBM accuracy was underestimated (see B Team report on Soviet ICBM Accuracy) and the implications of the enormous Soviet throw weight advantage were not drawn out. In fact, until very recently, little point was made of throw weight at all.

Current Analysis

NIE 11-3/8-75 (Volume 1) concludes that the hard target counterforce capability of the Soviet ICBM force is growing and could "pose a major threat" to Minuteman in the early 1980s. Yet, the *net assessment* implied in the key judgments remains far more comfortable than hard evidence warrants—especially when viewed in the context of broad Soviet strategic concepts and objectives, as compared with a similar context of U.S. requirements. This occurs because of a continuing insistence on treating these strategic forces solely in a narrow mutual assured destruction framework (buttressed by a relatively optimistic view of enduring Blue force capability) and on seeing Soviet strategic motivations in such U.S. terms.

Consequently, even while reporting evidence of far-reaching physical developments, the NIEs have resisted conclusions equally logical to those favored by the introduction of non-physical, soft conceptual biases; mutual deterrence in an assured destruction framework, a perspective on strategic force superiority that greatly limits its utility, and U.S. views on SALT and detente. The NIEs, then, have been based as much upon a certain set of conceptual and political assumptions about Soviet motivations as upon hard evidence. Even when the cumulative hard evidence tended to contradict these assumptions, they persisted.

Since the NIE in effect rests its conclusions on a net assessment, the assessment should reflect a broader

* The Annex contains a detailed history of NIE perceptions of Soviet strategic force developments and objectives since 1962.

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awareness of strategic force implications and *should explicitly include U.S. and Soviet strategic force requirements beyond that of maintaining a "devastating retaliation" capability. Soviet objectives go beyond that and so do U.S. force requirements, which recognize an assured destruction capability as a withhold or reserve force and only one of several criteria for strategic force sufficiency.*

Conclusion

Team B would emphasize far more strongly than the NIEs the ominous implications of the growth and developing properties of the Soviet ICBM and SLBM forces. The full sweep of these programs, and in particular the great ICBM throw weight, the improvement and multiplication of MIRVed warheads given that throw weight, and the steady modernization of the ICBM force—e.g., in accuracy and systems reliability—support a conclusion that the Soviets seek clear superiority in the capabilities of these forces, including the maximum feasible counterforce and warfighting capability. The thrust of these Soviet force developments and their potential threat to U.S. security and strategic objectives, politically and militarily, have not been adequately reflected in the NIEs. The threat includes the steady development of a potential war-winning capability but also encompasses—and reflects—a broader Soviet drive for strategic superiority as discussed in Parts One and Three. The political implications of these strategic capabilities and their role in the overall "correlation of forces"—which we would emphasize—have been insufficiently recognized in past NIEs.

2. Economic Constraints on Soviet Strategic Forces

The Estimating History

Consistently low intelligence estimates of the Soviet military defense burden have had serious broad warping effects on the estimating process and on the perceptions of users. Until 1975, estimates of Soviet military expenditures expressed as a percentage of GNP were as low or lower than the U.S. percentage, i.e., 6 to 8 percent. The high-level reader of the estimates was often reassured by the percent of GNP figures that the military balance could never get seriously skewed. These Soviet military "cost" estimates raised implicit or explicit questions in some quarters of the U.S. Government as to whether the magnitude of Soviet military efforts was being grossly exaggerated. Even in the face of a direct challenge of the basis for the low estimates, there was no inclination to reconsider. For a good number of years there was strong resistance to competing analysis showing higher levels of Soviet military spending.

National estimates on Soviet strategic nuclear *attack* forces written since 1962 have without exception stated that Soviet strategic capabilities have been constrained by considerations of economy. Estimates of Soviet strategic *defense* forces also contain numerous references to economic constraints, but less forceful ones: the history of massive Soviet expenditures on strategic defense systems seems to have impressed the drafters of the estimates and made them more cautious about positing resource limitations.

Much of the argumentation regarding constraints on force build-ups assumes (there is no documentation offered) that resource allocation and priorities issues in the USSR are reasonable facsimiles of such issues in the United States. This passage from NIE 11-8-62 is typical: "Moreover, the question of the proper allocation of total economic resources among competing demands, *and in particular between military and civilian purposes, has been an active issue at the highest levels of Soviet politics.* These considerations will continue to influence the scale and pace of Soviet programs for long range striking forces." Para. 45, p. 13. (Emphasis added.)

In NIE 11-3-67, a similar judgment is made with regard to strategic defenses. After noting a general Soviet disposition to accommodate military programs, that estimate states: "Nevertheless, Soviet leaders will continue to face difficult choices in allocating resources among a variety of claimants, both civilian and military. Their decision as to whether, and to what extent, to extend ABM deployment—potentially the most costly single military program on the horizon—must be made in the context of these competing claims." Para. 5, p. 6.

The evolution of NIE judgments about economic restraints on the Soviet ABM program is interesting. It suggests either an analytical blind spot or a policy influenced bias, or both. There is a disturbing correlation between the changing judgments from 1967 to 1972 and the policy issues affecting ABM programs for the same period.

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In 1968 there was a distinct muting of the 1967 economic restraint argument about the Soviet ABM program. It was replaced by a rationale which in essence predicted rather *un*constrained resource allocation to the program in the absence of a SALT agreement on ABM.

> "Current pressures may exercise a restraining influence on the strategic defense effort, but are unlikely to reduce it. For the near term, at least, expenditures for strategic defense will probably be maintained at their present high level, while military expenditures as a whole continue to rise. The trend for the longer term will depend heavily upon Soviet decisions concerning ABM deployment—potentially the most costly single military program on the horizon—and the related question of strategic arms control. If the Soviets embark upon any sizable new program of ABM deployment within the next few years, expenditures for strategic defense will increase and by the middle 1970's are likely to exceed those for strategic attack by a substantial margin." Para. 7, p. 7.

The estimate of 1969 treated the subject essentially as in 1968 with the addition of some cost estimates. By 1971 (NIE 11-3 was not republished in 1970) the NIE on strategic defense contains no reference to resource restraints in the discussion of the Soviet ABM program. In 1972, the future of the Soviet ABM program is discussed primarily in terms of ABM Treaty constraints and the capabilities of the Soviets to develop and deploy ABMs in the event that treaty were abrogated. Economic restraints on the ambitious Soviet ABM programs which are postulated in the event of abrogation are deemphasized. For instance, in rationalizing the Illustrative Force Model IV, the worst abrogated-treaty case postulated, economic restraint is treated thus:

> — "Deployment of strategic defense forces would increase to the point that, even though achievable without major new increases in productive capacities, they strain these capacities, and resources must be diverted to the extent that the *rate of growth* of the civilian economy is threatened." Para. 209, p. 63 (Emphasis added.)

In this 1972 estimate there is a heavy emphasis on the relationship between future Soviet strategic defense efforts and successful conclusions of *offensive* arms limitation agreements, which reflects the change of emphasis from ABM to offensive systems in SALT.

When this series of judgments is correlated over time with the evolution of U.S. policy (and political controversy) over U.S. ABM programs and arms limitation efforts, a strong circumstantial case emerges on the matter of politically influenced intelligence. This case is strengthened by the lack of any apparent *evidential* basis for shifting estimates of the nature of economic restraints to Soviet ABM programs.

A blind spot in analysis is indicated by the fact that there is no reference in the Soviet Strategic Attack and General Purpose Force estimates of the effects on economic constraints of the ABM Treaty which supposedly relieved the USSR of the burden of pursuing "the most expensive military program on the horizon." Since competition among military claimants has been a persistent part of the NIE argumentation concerning economic constraints on strategic attack systems, one would expect Soviet costs saved from ABM to have been applied to other military programs. The unspoken assumption of the drafters appears to have been that the savings effectuated on future ABM programs would go to the civilian economy, and not to other military programs.

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Serious disagreements over military resource allocations *have* occurred among Soviet military claimants and such disputes are well-documented. [redacted] evidence reveals policy disputes between components of the military-establishment—naval spokesmen versus ground force spokesmen, missile and rocket enthusiasts versus the "multimillion man army" traditionalists. These disputes were couched in operational or strategic terms, but no doubt had some roots in competing resource demands.

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Such documentation is not available to support the persistent NIE emphasis on military versus civilian resource competition. There have been in the past some disputes between heavy industry and medium and light industry sectors of the Soviet economy. The heavy industry spokesmen (from time to time referred to as "metal eaters") include the producers of military equipment, but this is not convincing evidence of a civilian economy challenge to military resource allocation priority paralleling that which occurs in Western societies.

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One area of evidence which has changed sharply during the past year is that concerning the Soviet defense burden. An accumulation of evidence on the Soviet military budget, topped by the testimony of a person who had had an opportunity to examine the budget in detail, has confirmed a gross underestimation of Soviet defense expenditures by U.S. intelligence. The 1970 Soviet military budget to which this source had had access was 100 percent *higher* than U.S. estimates for that year. New estimates by the intelligence community based on this source and others indicate that an error of this magnitude was involved in the economic inputs to national estimates for the past 10-12 years.

Analysis/Estimate

The primacy of the military priority in Soviet resource allocation decisions has long been strongly indicated by the magnitude of Soviet military programs and forces. This evidence is now reinforced by evidence of much higher military budgets than previously estimated. While Soviet military claimants for resources may compete with one another for resources, they face no serious competition from claimants in the civilian economy sector—nor is this surprising. Within what is, after all, a large and expanding GNP, the Soviets have made it absolutely clear that defense requirements have an almost absolute first call on available resources. Denial of consumer needs is not a new or inconsistent pattern of Soviet behavior—exactly the contrary is the case. *Therefore, Soviet strategic forces have yet to reflect any constraining effect of civil economy competition, and are unlikely to do so in the foreseeable future.*

Forecast

Soviet strategic forces will be shaped almost exclusively by the political leadership's view of military and political utility of producing the types and numbers of the systems involved. Constraints on the growth of strategic attack and defense capabilities will be technical in nature or due to production limitations.

Arms limitation agreements will become constraining factors only to the extent that they do not interfere with Soviet military-political goals. They may appear to result in a redirection of expenditures from one military purpose to another but even here this almost certainly reflects decisions which might well have been made in any event in the absence of agreement. Constraining agreements may be reached provided the alternative carries high risks to the Soviets of U.S. action which would endanger the attainment of their military-political goals.

3. Soviet Civil Defense

U.S. Estimating History

The National Estimates series 11-3 dealing with Soviet Strategic Defenses indicate a general lack of interest in the subject of Soviet Civil Defense coupled with doubt on the part of the drafters about the seriousness or efficacy of Soviet efforts in the civil defense area and doubt that civil defense would have any strategic importance even if the Soviets *were* serious about it.

Relative lack of interest is indicated by the brief and generalized treatment afforded the subject. Between NIE 11-3 of 1966 and that of 1974, Civil Defense was not even mentioned in the Summary and Conclusions (or "Key Judgments" or "Précis") portions of the estimates, which are normally all that is read by policy makers. When Civil Defense finally was mentioned in 1974, it was in one reassuring sentence: Soviet Civil Defense will be unable "to prevent massive casualties and the breakdown of the economic structure."* So far as we know, no serious analytical study supports this conclusion.

Doubt about the seriousness or efficacy of Soviet civil defense efforts was reflected in the persistent NIE references to "apathy" toward programs, resource constraints, and probable Soviet realization of the basic infeasibility of civil defense in general. Doubt about the strategic importance of civil defense was reflected in judgments about the requirement for several days' warning time for Soviet civil defense plans to be put into effect, a factor essentially nullifying the strategic impact of Soviet programs, in the view of the NIE drafters. It is perhaps not irrelevant to note that these views attributed to Soviet authorities are precisely the views held in many quarters in the U.S. civil defense effort. The possibility of "mirror-imaging" is therefore one which cannot readily be rejected.

* NIE 11-3/8-74, p. 59, Paragraph 188.

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NIEs duly reported the growing evidence of a strong Soviet emphasis on civil defense, such as the elevation of its chief to Deputy Minister of Defense level, Brezhnev's stress on civil defense at the 23rd Party Congress, and the large number of people assigned to the effort (50,000). But the evidence to date and its implications *has not been analyzed in national estimates in the context of the total Soviet policy of strategic offense and defense. Rather there has been a tendency to view Soviet civil defense efforts in the context of the U.S. concept of Mutual Assured Destruction.* This "mirror-imaging" probably accounts in large measure for the treatment in the estimates of civil defense as essentially an "add-on." This factor was no doubt reinforced by the concentration of intelligence analysts on the technical aspects of weaponry and military force structure which characterizes all national intelligence estimates on military matters.

Evidence

Satellite photography and information supplied by recent emigrés from the USSR have provided a substantial body of evidence indicating a very heavy and costly Soviet emphasis on Civil Defense since at least 1970. Much of the photographic evidence has been on hand for several years, but until recently it has not been exploited with a view to measuring Soviet civil defense efforts.

This evidence points to a much more determined and effective Soviet civil defense effort than we have hitherto estimated. Both photographic and human source evidence strongly indicate that since September 1971, when the function was directly subordinated to the Ministry of Defense, there has been a sharp increase of emphasis on Soviet civil defense. Photography proves the emphasis of the last several years on construction of personnel shelters in built-up areas and the hardening of war-essential industries against nuclear effects. Human sources report that in the same period there has been a considerably increased emphasis on the training of civilian personnel of all ages in protective measures to include practice evacuations of heavily populated areas. The goal of these efforts, as expressed by the Soviets,* is to reduce casualties in a nuclear exchange to under 10 million and to ensure the continued viability of essential industries.

The Soviet civil defense emphasis has been accompanied in about the same period by a massive effort to ensure the survival of the Soviet command and control system.

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Analysis/Estimate

Soviet civil defense efforts appear to be integrated with all other military programs to maximize the USSR's capabilities to fight a nuclear war and emerge from it with a viable society. Survival of key military and political cadres has priority in the Soviet effort, but the protection of the civil population as a whole is receiving increasing attention as the programs for hardening command and control systems near completion. The civil sector enjoys sufficient priority for resources to account for an annual expenditure since 1970 the equivalent of about one billion dollars per year. (Some analysts believe even this figure may understate the magnitude of the Soviet effort. The key point is however that no concerted USG effort has been made to study and assess this effort.)

The increased Soviet emphasis on civil defense dates from about the time that the Kremlin leadership could foresee the successful conclusion of an ABM-limiting treaty with the United States. This correlation in time was probably not coincidental. Soviet leaders probably reasoned that they would lose any contest with the United States in the field of active defenses against nuclear attack because of U.S. technological advantage at the time, but that in any contest in the field of passive defenses the USSR would win because it had the advantage of centralized control and a disciplined population. *It was only in the context of U.S. concurrence not to protect its population with the ABM that the Soviets could pursue a goal of achieving assured survival for the USSR and assured destruction for its major adversary.*

The circumstantial evidence of a correlation between the predictability of an ABM agreement and

* A Soviet manual on civil defense, Grazhdanskaia Oborona (1969) states that losses can be reduced to 5-8 percent of the Soviet urban population. Strategic Air Command analyses corroborate the feasibility of this goal.

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the new emphasis on civil defense is strengthened by the initiation at the same general time (1970-71) of an unprecedented expansion of Soviet strategic attack capabilities. Soviet expenditures on strategic attack forces jumped sharply in 1970, doubling the 1965 outlays.

The great importance attached by the USSR to its civil defense effort provides an unmistakable clue to Soviet overall doctrine with regard to general nuclear war. Such efforts are inconsistent with a view that the Soviets tacitly accept the concept of Mutual Assured Destruction as a basis for strategic force structure (or arms limitations). When viewed in combination with active strategic defenses and strategic attack forces the civil defense effort underscores the frankly stated Soviet adherence to the Clausewitzian concept of war as an extension of politics—even under nuclear conditions. These efforts contradict the assumptions that the Soviets view nuclear exchange as tantamount to destruction of their society and system or that they perceive strategic nuclear capabilities primarily as a deterrent. Rather these efforts point to the structuring of both defense and offense for war-fighting, with deterrence being a derivative function.

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Forecast

The Soviet civil defense effort will continue to enjoy high priority and heavy funding until and unless the Kremlin leadership becomes convinced that a superior Soviet nuclear war-fighting capability is either not achievable or not useful militarily or politically. If current efforts continue there is no reason to believe the Soviets will not achieve their civil defense goal of being able to hold casualties in a nuclear exchange to an acceptable level as well as preserving intact their political system. 25X1

4. Military Hardening

NIE Estimating Record

The Soviet program of dispersal, hardening and redundancy of its command and control system is unmatched in the Western world. The significance of this fact, and particularly the great disparity between U.S. and Soviet hardening efforts with its implications for the strategic balance, has barely been touched on in past NIE's. The treatment was so brief in fact in NIE 11-3/8-75, that the reader was left with the impression that the subject was of limited military significance.

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Evidence

U.S. intelligence has identified over 700 facilities hardened for nuclear warfare, about half of which are utilized by the Soviet high command, General Staff or Major Command Headquarters. The remainder are related to subordinate command levels.

The programs are continuing at a measured pace. Over 20 naval aviation airfield command and control facilities have already been hardened and the remainder is clearly programmed. All Strategic Rocket Force C & C facilities are already hardened with the major headquarters (i.e., 6 strategic army headquarters) hardened to 1000 PSI.

Command Centers at Theatre, Air Defense and Moscow NCA levels are believed to be hardened from 300 to 1000 PSI.

with over 700 buried antennas hardened to 1000 PSI already identified.

It is apparent that the Soviet C & C program is designed *to provide a much higher level of survivability than that planned by the Western world. It represents clear evidence of the Soviet desire to achieve a nuclear war fighting capability in contradistinction to the mutual deterrence concepts of the West.*

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Evidence is now coming to light of an extensive program of providing protection for personnel of certain industrial facilities. While the analysis has only scratched the surface, an interagency working group has already identified several hundred such facilities hardened to perhaps between 70 and 100 PSI. This program has been in effect since the late 1960's and construction is ongoing.

This is further evidence of the Soviet objective to survive a nuclear attack and reconstitute its industrial capability through a protected skilled working force. It offers the Soviets high assurances that its vital command and control structure will continue to function in a nuclear exchange while serious doubts exist as to U.S. and Free World's capability under similar circumstances. This matter needs far more detailed consideration than it has received in the past NIEs.

Forecast

We believe the Soviet hardening program will continue at a deliberate pace until all *vital* military command and control facilities have been treated. It will provide increasingly clear evidence of Soviet intent *to be prepared for general nuclear war rather than to achieve mutual deterrence.*

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5. Mobile Missiles

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NIE Estimating Record

The Soviets have developed two mobile missile systems which could have a significant impact on the strategic balance. The SS-X-16 is a solid fuel intercontinental range (5000 NM) missile, almost certainly tested in both a silo and mobile TEL (transporter/erector/launcher) mode. The program has had a high degree of cover and concealment associated with it,

The SS-20 is an IRBM version of the same missile using identical first and second stages. We have firm evidence of a large scale program planned for the SS-20

Although the intelligence community is debating the range and intended use of the SS-20, the prevailing view is that it is in fact a replacement for the SS-4 and SS-5 intermediate range missiles. The numbers of missiles (with 3 MIRV's on each) will cover the present peripheral target system now handled by the SS-4 & 5's as well as perhaps 300 SS-11's diverted to that use. (Thus there is a good possibility that as many as 300 intercontinental capable missiles will be released for use against U.S. targets with no SALT penalty when the SS-20 is deployed.)

Past NIEs (including 11-3/8-75) have estimated the SS-X-16 to be a replacement for the 60 SS-13 silos, with indications that once started the conversion could be completed within a year. These same estimates state the Soviets have probably decided to forego deployment of the mobile version of the SS-X-16 should a SALT TWO agreement be reached. Thus we are left with the impression that the SS-16 program will remain small and probably restricted to the silo mode, *even though new versions are under development and the mobile version is, in all probability, an operational missile.* These estimates further conclude that the mobile SS-X-16 will provide a hedge against increased silo vulnerability with the Soviets perhaps substituting some mobile missiles for silo missiles if mobile ICBM's are not banned in SALT TWO.

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Evidence

A serious problem of concern to Team "B" arises, however, in connection with the fact that the SS-X-16 intercontinental missile, according to best available evidence, almost certainly uses launch and ground handling equipment identical to that of the SS-20. *This gives the Soviets a real potential in a breakout situation to add the 3rd stage to the SS-20 (whose first two stages are identical with the SS-X-16) thereby giving the entire force an intercontinental capability.* There is no dispute within the intelligence community as to the feasibility of this move, yet no discussion of this matter can be found in current NIEs. A covered TEL could contain an SS-16 as easily as an SS-20, as could the covered storage sheds now being constructed.

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Analysis/Estimate

We are concerned, therefore, with both the ease of conversion of the SS-20 to SS-X-16 missiles and the numbers of SS-X-16 components now being produced. The ease of producing and storing in concealed areas an ICBM such as the SS-X-16 which can be launched from mobile launchers poses a serious potential threat to the strategic balance. In addition, the verification problem associated with deployment of a mobile ICBM like the SS-X-16, already in production and indistinguishable from an SS-20 when on covered launchers, is sobering. This matter needs full coverage and evaluation in NIE 11-3/8-76.

Forecast

We believe the SS-X-16 program will continue apace with improvements and modifications made to give the missile a MIRV capability as well as improved accuracy. We also believe the Soviets will continue to conceal the number of components produced which will permit the conversion of SS-20's to intercontinental missiles. We also believe the Soviets will retain this conversion capability to provide another option which could help upset the strategic balance, should international developments warrant such an exploitation.

6. Backfire

NIE Estimating Record

Previous NIEs, including 11-3/8-75, have generally concluded that Soviet Long Range Aviation (LRA) will continue to retain a relatively small intercontinental bomber force to complement Soviet Russia's ICBM and SLBM, forces. Backfire, while part of this force and credited with capabilities for operations against the continental U.S., has usually been characterized as an aircraft whose first priority will be peripheral missions (i.e., against NATO and China).

Recently, the CIA has tended to stress the peripheral role of the aircraft while at the same time minimizing its potential for strategic operations. For example, a memorandum prepared by the Office of Strategic Research, dated 6 May 1976, which updates the Backfire Program, concerns itself solely with the use of the aircraft in peripheral missions and its role as a replacement aircraft for the aging Badgers. No mention is made of any capability for using the bombers in the intercontinental role. 25X1

This pre-occupation with the case for a peripheral use of the aircraft has recently been extended to a reexamination of the unrefueled range of the aircraft with a new study purporting to show the Backfire to be a relatively short range vehicle with half the payload previously ascribed to it and thus not as well suited to the strategic mission. 25X1

Emphasis is also being placed in CIA memos on recent statements by Soviet SAL talk participants who repeatedly assert the aircraft to be designed and intended only to carry out peripheral strike missions, especially against NATO targets. In this connection, the Soviets have been ambivalent themselves in their statements on Backfire range, with the chief military man on the Soviet SAL Delegation, Gen. Trusov, giving the radius as 2160 nautical miles (and 5000 NM range) while Brezhnev told President Ford the aircraft had only one half the range of the Bison. Since we credit the Bison with a radius of 3200 NM, this would make Backfire only a 1600 NM radius aircraft.

Thus the intelligence community has been engaged in a vigorous debate over whether or not the Backfire bomber is a "strategic" bomber or one intended primarily for peripheral use. The issue of range has occupied a great deal of the analysts' time, with the view prevailing in some quarters that any unrefueled radius of action figures falling much below 3000 miles would severely limit the aircraft's use in the strategic role. A majority of the community has credited the aircraft with an unrefueled radius of about 2800 miles (5200 mile range), while the recent CIA analysis mentioned above reduces these figures substantially. This analysis based on twelve Backfire missions describes an aircraft of about 236,000 pounds with a radius of action of approximately 1850 to 2100 nautical miles—and a payload of about 10,000 pounds.

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Evidence

All these estimates have an inherent range analysis and assumptions sensitivity which could substantially

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reduce the high estimates or increase the low estimates.

A more significant point however is that categorizing a bomber as "strategic" is more than a matter of unrefueled range. The Russians have proposed definitions during SALT discussions which use terms like "anything comparable to existing strategic aircraft, (i.e., the Bison)." They suggest we look at all parameters of the aircraft including intended use and characterize an aircraft accordingly. We consider our FB-111 a strategic bomber and plan its use against Soviet targets even though its unrefueled radius falls short of even the lowest estimates of Backfire performance. Our strategic air command plans multiple refueling of the aircraft which gives it, on a typical mission a range (with 2 refuelings) of about 6400 nautical miles. All Backfires we have seen to date have been equipped with refueling probes. We have monitored refueling missions. There is no question therefore that the *aircraft has the inherent capability for strategic missions, should the Soviets chose to use it this way.*

The U.S., despite its planned use of the FB-111 in a strategic role, has sought to keep it out of SALT restrictions. The Soviets so far have preferred not to raise this issue, in the expectation that we would not insist on including Backfire in the "strategic" category.

The fact remains however that both aircraft have immense value in a strategic role if either side intends to use them that way.

A case can be made that he Soviets intend to use the Backfire only against peripheral targets such as NATO and China (and of course in its well established Naval role). The evidence for this lies in the absence of a sizeable tanker fleet, the very limited refueling seen to date, suggesting a low level of operational training in this mode, the relatively short missions we have seen, and the current basing pattern, (including no staging to advanced bases such as Anadyr). And as the CIA studies so frequently point out there are many targets in NATO and China that can be covered well by the Backfire.

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Recent evidence, however, permits a different view of the Backfire's intended role. As indicated above, all Backfires have been observed to be equipped for refueling. With this capability the issue of unrefueled radius becomes more academic.

CIA takes the view that the current tanker force is insufficient to support a sizeable intercontinental bomber force and as late as November 1975 felt that the available evidence indicated the Soviets were not developing a new tanker aircraft.

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New evidence indicates the Soviets are in fact working with the IL-76 as a possible tanker. The use of the "Classic" transport could provide a sizeable tanker force in relatively short time periods with one refueling from such an aircraft extending the range from 1500 to 2000 miles. Two refuelings would make even the minimum performance version of the Backfire a 3000 NM plus radius aircraft, clearly giving it intercontinental capability. In fact using wartime safety rules analysts see the aircraft achieving a range well in excess of 7000 miles with two refuelings.

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Analysis/Estimate

A reasonable view of Soviet intent could very well be that the aircraft has been designed to provide the flexibility to accomplish both the peripheral and intercontinental missions with the aircraft actually being used in the role which the developing tactical scenario dictates. This view is enhanced by the fact that the Soviets are now deploying an aircraft slightly smaller but very similar to the U.S. F-111 for use against NATO targets now probably covered by the Backfire. The "Fencer," in many respects is a better aircraft for use against NATO as it is optimized for low altitude penetration, has a more accurate all-weather bomb/nav system than Backfire and with its small radar cross section is more difficult to detect, track and destroy than the Backfire. One might well ask why the Soviets felt it necessary to produce such an aircraft in large numbers (production is now about 5 per month) if Backfires were to be the primary peripheral vehicle. Most NATO vital targets (airfields,

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nuclear storage sites, command and control facilities, etc.) are within easy range of the Fencer now deployed just beyond the Polish border in Western Russia.

One must also consider the fact that the Backfire program is still in its infancy and that the real intended use of the aircraft may not become apparent until it appears in some numbers in LRA operational units. At present the force consists of 20 plus planes located at two operational bases. We have good evidence that it probably will be produced in substantial numbers, with perhaps 500 aircraft off the line by early 1984. At that point the numbers of Fencers and Backfires combined would appear excessive for the peripheral mission alone. In this connection, recent photographic evidence of substantial plant expansion raises the possibility of even higher production rates for Backfire.

Forecast

If the Backfire is excluded from the strategic category we will be ignoring the Soviet option for a breakout which could be significant in light of the production figures mentioned above. We believe the Soviets will keep this option viable and will develop supporting capabilities, such as modern tankers, clearly permitting use of the aircraft in the intercontinental role, should this become advantageous to them.

7. Soviet Anti-Satellite Testing

Estimating History

The Evidence

In 1968, the Soviets initiated actual non-nuclear ASAT testing, a fact which was reflected in the 1969 NIE. By 1971 (Feb), NIE 11-3 noted that a non-nuclear ASAT capability had been demonstrated, but that "a fully operational system would require greater flexibility than was displayed in the Soviet tests."* It was believed that the same constraints on ASAT use discussed in earlier years would continue to prevail, and would, in fact, be reinforced by the increasing dependence of the Soviets upon their own satellite systems as well as the effects of the SAL negotiations.

In an August 1971 supplement, the NIE noted that the Soviets were in a period of frequent ASAT testing, and questioned why they did not employ a non-nuclear ASAT variant of the Galosh ABM, which would be capable of direct ascent intercepts and therefore highly effective against US reconnaissance satellites. This reasoning led to the view that the ASAT system was a long range program ultimately directed against the full range of US space systems, which could have originated in response to hypothetical systems (e.g., orbital bombardment) widely discussed in the early 1960's, but not introduced.

The hiatus in ASAT testing from 1971 to 1976 has led to the publication of essentially unchanged estimates concerning the Soviet ASAT system, although Soviet laser capabilities have been given increasing emphasis as they have advanced. In addition, in 1974 the NIE noted that the Soviets had demonstrated a capability to place satellites in geostationary orbit, thus potentially extending their ASAT capabilities to that altitude.

* NIE 11-3-71, p. 79, paragraph 207.

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Analysis/Estimate

As it currently exists, the Soviet ASAT system has several operational limitations which must be considered in assessing its potential utility to the USSR.

(1) Altitude Limitation. This was noted above, and is primarily a function of the launch vehicle. It could be alleviated by use of a larger launch vehicle such as the SL-12, although Soviet views regarding the necessity of testing at higher altitudes prior to operational use remain unknown.

(2) Launch Site Limitations. Using only TT, ASATs can be launched only when target satellites pass within the TT coordinates. For low altitude satellites, this occurs twice a day, thus yielding periods of about 12 hours in which targets are not subject to negation. This could be alleviated by establishment of ASAT operations at Plesetsk (PK), where two SL-11 launch pads are also available, or by converting SS-9 silos to accept the SL-11. Extensive modifications would be necessary for the latter alternative, and no evidence of such modifications to SS-9 silos currently exists.

(3) Target Capacity. As noted, each target satellite requires a separate ASAT launch. Although US reconnaissance systems maintain only a small number of satellites, which cannot be rapidly replaced, on orbit, a militarily effective attack upon planned systems (such as GPS) would seem to require development of an ASAT vehicle with a multiple engagement capability.

While Soviet intentions for the current system cannot be determined, consideration of its characteristics and limitations does permit attribution of several potential applications:

(1) Political Use. Demonstration of intent, political "shock" effects, etc.

(2) Crisis Management. One time denial of information during a high intensity crisis situation.

(3) Extended Conventional War. Denial of tactical information over an extended period of time, possibly preceded by or coupled with lower level anti-satellite operations, such as laser blinding, ECM, etc. Physical satellite destruction may be more likely as the nuclear threshold is approached.

would be fully in consonance with Soviet employment of other space systems, such as their radar ocean surveillance satellite, in tactical operations.

(4) Strategic Research and Development. Provide test and operational data for use in development of more capable ASAT systems.

It is worth noting that the second series of Soviet ASAT tests began about a year after the ABM treaty, which had significantly constrained the number of ABM launchers that the Soviets could possess. Since this ASAT system is totally ineffective in an ABM role, its development may reflect a Soviet desire to avoid diverting any of their ABM system to an anti-satellite

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role, while at the same time acquiring an ASAT system that could in no way be construed as a violation of the ABM Treaty.

Forecast

The most significant threat represented by the Soviet ASAT may well be its use in a research and development role since, if true, *this provides evidence of Soviet intentions to be able to deny the US the essential support of its space systems in potential future conflicts at all levels of the spectrum.*

The development of a more capable ASAT system would be indicated by tests of one or more of the following capabilities:

(1) High altitude intercepts.

(2) Intercepts against maneuvering targets.

(3) Multiple intercepts by a single ASAT vehicle.

(4) Crossing intercepts at greater relative velocities.

(5) Employment of directed energy weapons (lasers, particle beam weapons) to or in space.

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In assessing the impact of the current Soviet ASAT system and technological developments related to more capable future systems, it is necessary to keep in mind the long development lead times and long orbital lifetimes characteristic of US space systems. These factors give rise to the possibility that, if survivability measures for US systems are predicated upon the observed Soviet ASAT system, *the USSR could seriously threaten essential US systems by means of an accelerated test and deployment program for an advanced ASAT system. To avoid this danger, it would be prudent to base survivability measures for US space systems more upon recognized Soviet technological capabilities than upon identified Soviet ASAT systems.*

To summarize, the USSR currently has an operational anti-satellite system which has military utility in a limited number of scenarios, but whose primary importance is as evidence of a Soviet determination to develop anti-satellite systems having high military value across the spectrum of conflict. It is likely that the Soviets will continue anti-satellite system development in the foreseeable future, and they are likely to couple it with their developments of directed energy weapons.

8. Soviet Strategic ASW

U.S. Estimating History

The subject of Soviet strategic ASW was first raised in NIE 11-3-71. At that time, evidence of a large-scale, aggressive effort to develop a variety of new ASW sensors, weapons, and platforms, some of them employing techniques which are not used by the U.S. was first formally acknowledged by the community. In like manner, this estimate reached the judgment that at the time, some 3% of the total Soviet military and space budget was spent on ASW. However, this did not count research and development and the estimate noted "we cannot quantify [this], but [outlays] are very substantial, and are especially significant—."*

The key judgment in each of the estimates from 1971 to the present has been that the Soviets will be unable to solve the problems of initial detection of U.S. SSBNs in the open ocean on a scale which the estimators believe would be required to counter this force within the period of the estimates. The most recent estimate (NIE 11-3/8-75) is worded "we conclude that the Soviets have little potential for achieving success in either of these areas [detectors and tracking in the open ocean] in the next ten years."**

On the other hand, every estimate recounted a unanimous impression of an aggressive, extensive, well-founded, vigorous, and broadly based research program with high priority in naval planning. Likewise, every estimate distinctly made the point that our information on the direction of Soviet basic research, the specific applications of broad technical programs, and the potential should one or more succeed, is significantly deficient. Each paper further stated in equivalent terms, that U.S. work on non-acoustic detection means was not extensive.

* NIE 11-3-71, p. 15, paragraph 7.

** NIE 11-75, Vol. I, p. 41, paragraph 83.

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The Evidence

The estimates from 1971 to 1975 which deal with Soviet ASW, and the interagency memorandums supporting them, provide only the briefest tutorial of many acoustic and non-acoustic detection principles with a short reference to some Soviet work in these fields. The impression left on a non-technical reader is one of Soviet dabbling in arcane arts which are disdained by U.S. technology, and considered something of a wild goose chase, with little motivation for us to follow, given the small chance of success opined by the authors.

While the evidence is less than complete, there is in fact a substantial body of intelligence on Soviet ASW R&D accumulated since about the mid-1960's when evidence of a major thrust in non-acoustic research could be identified.

There are a number of analyses of these activities some performed in CIA, more in the Navy. was the first extensive, in-depth, and technically broad examination of all aspects of Soviet ASW. It was done under Navy auspices and published in early 1974. This report should be required reading for anyone seriously interested in the depth and breadth of Soviet work and the scope of their involvement and dedication to the solution of the strategic ASW problem.

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A study on Soviet work in internal waves and surface wake phenomena of submarines was published in July 1976 by DIA. The work details the extent of Soviet resource commitment to this work and gives an overview (at a low classification level) of the technology involved. There are undoubtedly similar studies which relate to Soviet work on magnetics, radar, electro-optics (including lasers), and nuclear energy. There is a body of evidence in these areas

In sum, there is not the dearth of information which the estimates tend to indicate; rather there has been a limited capability in the U.S. intelligence community to understand, analyze, and assess it. Non-acoustic ASW has suffered for the appellation of "unsound ASW."

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judge Soviet intentions and progress has been smaller and more limited than is desirable.

Analysis/Estimate

Even without access to the body of intelligence available since 1974, or the opportunity to trace U.S. intelligence progress in collection and analysis since one can make some rational assumptions and judgments based on a general background and the references in the NIE's since 1971:

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1. Neutralizing U.S. (and all non-Soviet) SSBNs is one of the highest priority national objectives of strategic defensive planning and policy of the Soviet Union. It would be totally uncharacteristic of the Soviets and contrary to evidence to find otherwise.

2. The problem has been addressed since the late 1950's when our determination to proceed with Polaris and our success in mating weapon and platform became evident.

3. A major Soviet commitment to non-acoustic research was made in the mid-1960's.

4. The Soviets probably recognized their lag in acoustic technology for low-frequency surveillance, quieting, and mobile sensors by at least the early to mid-1960's, and certainly by the late 1960's. This reinforced a decision to place greatest emphasis for research on non-acoustic methods, and to continue acoustic system development at a slower pace. In addition, the Soviets have so far avoided a major commitment to ASW systems based on LOFAR technology per se.

5. Soviet investment in ASW R&D has increased significantly over the past ten years, and together with other spending for strategic ASW, represents a substantial portion of the strategic defensive budget.

Given this extensive commitment of resources and the incomplete appreciation in the U.S. of the full implications of many of the technologies involved, the absence of a deployed system by this time is difficult to understand. The implication could be that the Soviets have, in fact, deployed some operational non-acoustic systems and will deploy more in the next few years.

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Following this step in logic, it is both unprudent and illogical to estimate *no* success over the next ten

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years in programs of which we have so incomplete an understanding. Technical break-throughs, such as a doubling of detection ranges achievable by using airborne magnetic anomaly detection to a mile or more, (by means of an adaptation of a commercial magnetic radiometer, already achieved here) tend to make the sweeping optimism of NIE 11-3/8-75 very difficult to justify.

Forecast

The very firm *negative* 10-year forecasts of Soviet ASW capabilities are uncharacteristic of national intelligence estimates, which normally tend to hedge bets over the longer term. This is especially true of estimates of defensive capabilities which are perforce net assessments. The firm negative judgment could well raise doubts among consumers whether it is not affected by policy considerations, such as the desire to protect the U.S. SLBM program; the less obvious consideration being support for the general proposition that the Soviets could never hope for militarily meaningful strategic nuclear superiority because they would *always* have to absorb a full SLBM strike. These doubts are reinforced rather than dispelled by the more detailed treatment of Soviet ASW efforts in the text of the estimates.

A more definitive forecast of Soviet ASW capabilities requires a very thorough review of a mass of pertinent evidence, much of which the Navy (for valid operational reasons) strictly controls. Such a review should be carried out under national authority using scientific expertise of indisputable neutrality as concerns the outcome.

Until such a thoroughgoing review has been accomplished *we cannot with any assurance whatever forecast the probability or extent of success of Soviet ASW efforts. However, we are certain that these probabilities are not zero, as the current NIE implies.*

9. ABM and Directed Energy Weapon R&D

Estimating History

The history of Soviet ABM estimates* has generally been characterized by:

— appreciation of a high level of Soviet interest and effort, especially when seen as a component of the overall strategic air defense program;

— projection during mid-late 1960s of the *possible* deployment of large numbers of ABMs;

— continuing assessment of greatly limited actual achievements and prospects for success (except for the early warning radar network);

— controversy, somewhat muted in most recent years, over the potential and inherent ABM capability of SAM, with a general NIE discounting of such capabilities.

The conclusion of the SALT ABM Treaty reinforced the subjective community disbelief in conventional ABM effectiveness to lead to a general conclusion that the Soviets had become "dissatisfied with the effectiveness of conventional ABM systems" and downgraded their programs' goals. Continuing Soviet ABM R&D became seen largely as "a hedge against treaty abrogation" (by whom?) and a prudent exploration of alternative technologies.

Until recently there has been no estimating record on directed energy programs. Recently Soviet R&D programs in these areas have been included in Strategic Defense estimates or in one case as a fairly thorough special report (*Interagency Intelligence Report on Soviet Capabilities to Develop Strategic Laser Systems, February 1975*).

Present Estimates and Evidence

The ABM capability of those presently deployed systems *treated as ABM* by the NIE seems to be as strategically limited as concluded. That conclusion, however, does not extend to the overall impact of:

(1) ABM potential in systems treated as "non-ABM" or "tactical-ABM";

(2) The R&D effort and prospects for improvement in ABM capabilities, both conventional and exotic;

(3) ABM as one integral part of a combined damage limiting strategic defense.

NIE 11-3/8-75 touches upon all three areas, and gives considerable treatment and weight to the second, but reaches conclusions from the evidence available that unnecessarily discount or downgrade the Soviet effort, without emphasizing what it has accomplished—especially since 1971-72—relative to U.S. ABM efforts. The effectiveness of ABM, of course, cannot be assessed without direct comparison

* These estimates were part of a separate NIE (11-3) on Soviet Strategic Defenses until combined in 1974 into NIE 11-3/8 reports.

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with offensive ballistic missile capabilities, and it is clear that the judgments made are implicit net assessments based upon high confidence in the enduring penetrability of U.S. MIRVs.

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SAMS

The NIE conclusion that current Soviet SAMS "are not suitable" for ABM defense is explicitly rejected as regards the SA-5 in a note by the Air Force Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence. It is also not a conclusion accepted by many other SAM-ABM experts, even though the NIE conclusion rests on currently deployed SAMs instead of improved or new generation SAM components. We know that SAM systems do inherently have ABM capability. The judgmental question is how significant or extensive is this capability.

The ABM capability, when related to other defensive means, may therefore be considerable. This is especially possible when Soviet advances in what is referred to as "tactical ABM" and in mobile radar components are taken into consideration. Mobile ABM system components combined with the deployed SAM system could produce a significant ABM capability.

ABM R&D Prospects

The NIE ambivalently concludes in one place that the Soviets continue their ABM R&D "at a pace not significantly reduced from that which existed prior to the ABM Treaty" and in another at a "relatively slow pace". However one sorts out these conclusions, neither gives adequate weight to the vigorous and multi-faceted Soviet R&D program covering both conventional and possible future ABM means. In the conventional ABM area, the SAL Treaty can be taken as evidence of Soviet appreciation of the potential of (U.S.) ABM rather than as loss of interest in ABM. In fact, the continuing effort at SSMTC, the Emba "tactical" system, the emergence of new and improved radars and interceptor missiles, all strongly indicate continuing interest and progress. The magnitude of the effort is in stark contrast to that of the U.S.

In the more exotic areas of technology applicable to ABM it is more difficult to evaluate progress, in no small part because U.S. understanding of the state of the art and near term prospects of directed energy is far from complete and possibly not as advanced as that of the Soviets, who, it is clear, have been conducting far more ambitious research in these areas. Understanding that there are differing evaluations of the potentialities of laser and CPB for ABM, *it is still clear that the Soviets have mounted ABM efforts in both areas of a magnitude that it is difficult to overestimate.* At least, it seems a reasonable conclusion based upon the expense and vigor of Soviet R&D in these areas *that the Soviets attach greater probability to eventual success over a shorter period of time than does the U.S.*

The scale and scope of Soviet ABM R&D are too considerable to conclude loss of interest or to write them off as mere components of a more dynamic and high risk R&D philosophy (although they are that also).

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Strategic Defense

One of the problems with the NIE approach is that even though the subject is Strategic Defense it is broken down into separate areas (ABM, Air Defense, ASW, ASAT, Civil Defense and Hardening), each treated separately and in isolation from the others. What is then omitted is an assessment of present and potential Strategic Defense capabilities *combining all efforts.* While it may be possible (though often erroneously, in our view) to disparage the effectiveness of each component of Strategic Defense taken separately, the combined and cumulative efforts may possess considerable strategic significance.

10. Soviet Non-Central Nuclear Systems

Estimating History

Coverage of the Estimates. Throughout the 1960's, discussion of most Soviet non-central systems was included in the NIE's on Strategic Attack Forces.*

* Soviet Naval Aviation Forces have never been discussed, despite the fact that these include upwards of 500 Badger and Blinder medium bombers; these are principally directed against U.S. Naval forces, although some elements could be shifted to attacks on land targets, should the need arise. The estimate on peripheral forces in fact notes that Naval Aviation forces may be intended for use in the large-scale non-nuclear attack on NATO's nuclear forces that is part of Soviet planning for the early stages of a conventional war in Europe.

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the 1969 estimate, medium bombers and MR/IRBM forces were relegated to a separate section on "Peripheral Forces," foreshadowing their disappearance from the 11-8 series of the following year.

The 1969 NIE also relegated its discussion of the roughly 60 Soviet cruise missile submarines equipped with SS-N-3 launchers to a footnote. These systems had been included in earlier estimates, which had noted that one variant of the SS-N-3 had been tested against land targets to ranges of 450 nm: the 1965 and 1966 NIE's even had a map showing coverage of the U.S. from the 100 fathom line using a missile of this range. The 1968 NIE stated, however, that the use of this system in a strategic attack role was unlikely, considering the size of the Soviet ICBM force and the appearance of a new SLBM (the implied assumption being that this meant the Soviet Union had reached some level of "sufficiency").

By the 1970 NIE, peripheral attack systems had been dropped entirely from the 11-3/8 series, and their treatment relegated to other estimates (the bulk of them coming under 11-14). Very little discussion was given of this change, which obscured from view a very large number of Soviet delivery vehicles, albeit older and less capable ones. Such reasoning as was given to support the initial distinction between "peripheral" and "intercontinental" attack, in the 1969 NIE, represented unabashed mirror-imaging: "This method of treating Soviet forces is basically the same as that being used by DoD in U.S. military planning."

The change of coverage that began with the 1970 estimate may have been intended to fit categories that would be more relevant to the SALT process then beginning. If so, however, the approach would have to be faulted for prejudging a fundamental SALT issue, unresolved to this day, namely the question which systems are to be considered "strategic" in the SALT sense.

By failing to present the Soviet view of their own peripheral attack systems in the context of discussions of strategic forces, the NIE's during the SALT period may have influenced U.S. perceptions of the FBS issue in a misleading fashion. The strong impression reportedly made on American negotiators when confronted by Brezhnev with maps showing the potential of peripheral U.S. systems for attacking the Soviet Union, might have been different had the NIE's regularly contained maps showing the numbers and capabilities of *Soviet* peripheral systems.

Projections of numbers. The NIEs downgrading of Soviet peripheral attack systems had been foreshadowed in earlier years by projections of a sharp decline in numbers of these systems. The 1964 Estimate projected a rapid decline in LRA medium bombers/tankers from almost 900 to 290-510 by 1970 and continued reduction thereafter. (Actual mid-*1976* numbers are 650 in LRA, in addition to more than 500 Badgers and Blinders in SNAF, 374 of which are configured as bombers or ASM carriers.)

The projections in the Estimates of the mid-1960's of relatively flat MR/IRBM numbers did not project the deactivation of some 60 launchers in the Far East. However, the 1965 projection of a force of 350-700 MR/IRBM's in the 1970-75 period, included a long-term reduction on the low side which did not materialize (current force is almost 600).

New Systems. The Estimates of the 1960's tended to overestimate the rate of introduction of new medium range missiles. The 1966 NIE anticipated a new IRBM, possibly mobile, as early as 1968 (but did not predict the capabilities of the SS-X-20—a MIRVed, large-throw-weight IRBM—which appeared in 1974). The SS-14 MRBM was never deployed in the "substantial numbers" predicted in the 1969 NIE (p. 30). Frequent dissents by AF Intelligence projecting the appearance of a follow-on medium bomber or a new ASM for the Badger as early as 1970 were fundamentally more accurate than the NIE projections that no new medium bomber would appear.

Doctrine and Missions of Medium Systems. The estimates of the late 1960's display some embarrassment over the difficulty of explaining the objectives of such a massive peripheral attack force, which had earlier been expected to decline as the intercontinental forces grew. The previous theory that a "hostage Europe" was a poor man's substitute for the Assured Destruction capability the Soviet Union had earlier lacked, lost plausibility as the ICBM and SLBM forces expanded. Growing concerns about China began to be mentioned, even though most of the forces in question are deployed against Europe and the one notable *drawdown* of peripheral forces was in the Far East. A third explanation offered was to refer to earlier Khrushchev statements about the need to have a multiplicity of systems to ensure *survivability.*

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The value of large numbers for *war fighting*, or as a strategic reserve in an extended nuclear conflict, was apparently not considered, although to do so would have raised some interesting questions about the objectives of Soviet longer-range systems as well. Instead, consideration of the close connections between medium-range forces and longer-range ones simply ceased with the 1970 restructuring of the NIE.

There was much discussion in the early NIE's of the question whether Soviet medium bombers had the capability and/or mission for attacks on the United States. The majority (with the Air Force dissenting) generally concluded that there was insufficient evidence of the training in refueling or preparation for use of Arctic Bases such as were deemed necessary for missions against most U.S. targets. However, the majority which held the view that medium bombers were intended for peripheral missions rarely elaborated on what those missions were.* In general, there was no mention of a possible role for medium-range bombers as a reserve force in a protracted nuclear conflict.

Evidence/Analysis

Artificiality of Peripheral/Intercontinental Separation. Despite the evident importance of systems clearly designed to attack the United States, the emphasis on these systems, and their abstraction from others, contributes to a misunderstanding of the *Soviet* view of strategic forces. *It places the analysis in a strait-jacket that does not fit the Russians' own organization of strategic forces, distributed among SRF, LRA, and the Navy, not between intercontinental and peripheral.*

The orientation of a significant portion of the Soviet *ICBM* force so that it can attack targets in Europe and China as well as the United States reflects their basic view that the continuum of available forces should be used in a flexible and coordinated fashion to achieve unified strategic objectives.**

The impression derived from Soviet organization is reinforced by doctrinal writings which emphasize, indeed in tiresome detail, the importance of integration of all military arms.

The evidence is clear that the strategic balance, in the Soviet view, includes much more than those systems labeled "strategic" in the U.S. defense budget. On the Western side, they include most U.S. and allied nuclear delivery systems (beyond very short range ones). This half of the equation has been pressed by the Soviets at SALT. At the same time, however, the Russians have attempted to reject the relevance of their own massive non-central force capabilities by insisting that they could not strike the United States and were therefore not "strategic." This claim is factually inaccurate, since many of these systems, such as medium bombers and long-range SLCM's *can* reach the United States. More important, it is at variance with the actual Soviet view of nuclear forces as a continuum of capabilities which, if used, would have a single *strategic objective*, i.e., the political acquiescence or military defeat of the Western Alliance.

Current Soviet Buildup. While the decline in medium range forces projected by the NIE's in the late 1960's failed to materialize, there was in fact no large buildup of these forces during that time. This no longer holds true of the 1970s when a major buildup has been underway. While much of this buildup comes under the heading of "modernization," the term is misleading for it suggests simple maintenance of aging or obsolescent forces. In fact, developments now underway will substantially increase Soviet capabilities by:

— Increasing nuclear ground attack capabilities, through the introduction of new tactical aircraft, particularly FENCER but also FITTER, FLOGGER and late model FISHBEDS. The SU-19 FENCER, (very similar to the US-F-111) can

* The omission is most striking in the discussion of Backfire, which say very little about the need for so substantial an increase in the payload or range of Soviet peripheral bombers, and fail entirely to discuss the role of shorter-range aircraft (like FENCER) in performing the peripheral mission. In fact, there is only one sentence on the Backfire in the text of NIE 11-14-75 on Warsaw Pact Forces Opposite NATO. See also above, pp. 29.

** Further evidence of an organizational nature pointing to a Soviet emphasis on the unity of nuclear strike forces comes from such things as the commonality of IRBM and ICBM development programs.

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carry four ASM's (4,000 lbs.) to a radius of 1,000 nm., and has substantially improved capabilities for penetrating NATO air defenses. The large current production of these aircraft as replacements for much less capable tactical aircraft will greatly increase the number of systems available to the Soviets for attacking theater targets near the front. It will also add to their flexibility, including their capability for destroying western *nuclear* forces during a non-nuclear phase of combat.

— Substantially extending the range of peripheral attack systems with Backfire and the SS-20 to cover larger surrounding land and ocean areas beyond the Eurasian land-mass.

— Introducing qualitative improvements which have the effect of increasing quantitative capabilities.

Backfire has a substantially larger payload than the Badgers and Blinders, and will be significantly less vulnerable to air defenses.

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Conclusions

Nuclear operations on the periphery of the Soviet Union have a crucial importance in Soviet military-political doctrine. Singling out forces capable of damaging the U.S., for separate and primary attention, gives a misleading impression of Soviet strategic objectives. Soviet writings stress, for example, that "in the final analysis, the area and direction of the main attack and operations . . . should ensure achieving operation objectives pertaining to crushing the enemy's armed forces and *removing individual countries or coalitions from the war.*"*

Soviet non-central forces fit into an overall strategic framework in which the value of forces, even for deterrence, is measured by their potential contribution to fighting and winning a war against a Western coalition. Capabilities to attack U.S. allies and U.S. forces overseas are as important as capabilities to attack the United States itself. In this framework, greater numbers are always better, not merely to enhance survivability but for offensive use, to hedge against inevitable uncertainties of warfare and to provide reserves for an extended conflict.

Current Soviet developments in peripheral attack capabilities indicate an intention to weaken the second leg of the NATO triad of conventional, theater nuclear and strategic nuclear forces. With clear superiority in conventional forces and parity or better in intercontinental forces, the Soviets may now be seeking to eliminate whatever remaining advantage NATO may possess in theater nuclear forces. Given the political importance of the "coupling" with U.S. long-range nuclear forces provided by NATO's theater nuclear capabilities, the Soviets must believe that important political benefits in Europe would flow from achievement of demonstrable *regional* nuclear preponderance. *If this is so, we may now be witnessing an evolution of theater nuclear forces that has close parallels to the evolution of intercontinental forces in the late 1960's.*

An additional concern arises from the development by the Soviets of forces they describe as peripheral which have either the inherent capability for intercontinental operations (as in the case of Backfire) or the capability to be easily and quickly converted to intercontinental use (as in the case of the SS-20). This gives them the flexibility to pose the threat that the strategic situation demands at any given time. *The beginning of SS-X-20 development as a spin-off from the SS-16 program just as SALT was getting serious, suggests a possible deliberate Soviet conclusion that while SALT may limit slightly the rate of growth of their intercontinental capability, the effect of the limitations can be reduced by development of non-limited systems.*

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PART THREE

SOVIET STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

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PART THREE

SOVIET STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

To be properly understood, the strategic objectives of the Soviet Union require, in addition to a realistic analysis of strategic nuclear force capabilities, continuous, careful monitoring of Soviet global activities: theoretical pronouncements of Communist leaders must be observed concurrently with Soviet actions in the military, political, and economic spheres in the various regions of the globe; the evidence thus obtained needs to be juxtaposed and synthesized. Such monitoring and synthesizing is not effectively realized at the present time in the U.S. Government, and there exists no document that provides an overview of Soviet "grand strategy". Given the absence of a study of this kind within the U.S. Government, the best that can be done here is to provide an outline of some of the outstanding features of Soviet global strategy, especially as it bears on the United States.

1. *Political Objectives*

The ultimate Soviet objective is (as it has been since October 1917) the worldwide triumph of "socialism", by which is meant the establishment of a system which can be best characterized as a regime of state capitalism administered exclusively by a self-perpetuating elite on the model of the Soviet Communist Party. Soviet leaders still strive for such a new global system, wholly integrated with the Soviet Union and directed from Moscow. Judging by pronouncements of leading Soviet theorists, this ideal continues to remain a long-range objective. However, the realities of an expanding Communist realm have induced the Soviet leaders to accept (at any rate, for the time being) a more limited and flexible formulation in which the USSR remains the authority of last resort and the principal protector but no longer the model which all Communist countries must undeviatingly emulate. The East Berlin meeting of Communist parties held in June 1976 ratified this formulation; but only time will tell how willing the Soviet elite is to grant non-Soviet Communists a measure of political freedom.

It is adherence to the historic ideal of a worldwide Communist state and the steady growth of military confidence that lends Soviet policies that offensive character which is stressed in Part One of the present Report. Not the fear that "capitalism" will engage in an unprovoked assault against "socialism" but the desire steadily to reduce the "capitalist" realm and still to be able to deal with any possible backlash when it is in its death throes motivates Soviet political behavior.

The emergence of a worldwide "socialist" order is seen by the Soviet leadership as a continuous process, inexorable in nature but not without its pitfalls and temporary reverses. The ultimate triumph of the cause is seen as the result of economic, political and military processes which will bring about a series of convulsions in the structures of the Western world and end in their destruction. Once these conditions occur, Western Communist parties, leading the disaffected elements and backed by Soviet power, are expected to be able to assume control.

As noted, this historic process is perceived as occurring concurrently (though not necessarily in a synchronized manner) at all levels. Given this view, Communist "grand strategy" requires that a variety of weapons be utilized to stimulate the process of Western decline and to seize such opportunities as may present themselves while it is in progress. Thus, for example, the establishment of close Soviet economic ties with Third World countries or Soviet direct or indirect involvement in these countries can help to

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weaken the links connecting "capitalist" economies with their essential sources of raw materials and cheap labor, and thereby help to accelerate "capitalism's" economic decline. Communist parties operating in the "capitalist" world can help organize disaffected groups of all kinds and with their assistance undermine orderly democratic processes; or else, where they are too weak to undertake such ambitious attempts, they can seek to have their members or sympathizers occupy key positions in the trade unions, government or academic centers so as to be in a position to paralyze industrial economies and democratic institutes at the appropriate time. Violently discontented ethnic groups, such as the Palestinians, can be taken under Soviet wings and encouraged to promote conditions of permanent turmoil over large geographic areas.

In other words, *strategic weapons*—defined as weapons capable of destroying an enemy's capacity to resist—*embrace in the Soviet understanding a greater range of instrumentalities of persuasion and coercion than is commonly dealt with in Western strategic analyses.* The Soviet objective is an international system totally responsive to a Soviet mandate. In such a system an antagonist's military capabilities must be effectively neutralized so that they cannot be used to resist Soviet aspirations. If necessary, ultimately the Soviet Union should be able to destory those capabilities if the antagonist refuses to acquiesce. But this is not all. *Because the Soviet Union ultimately wishes to destroy not merely its opponents' fighting capacity but their very capacity to function as organized political, social, and economic entities, its strategic arsenal includes a great choice of political, social, and economic weapons beside the obvious military ones.* For this reason, *Soviet strategic objectives cannot be accurately ascertained and appreciated by an examination of the USSR's strategic nuclear or general purpose forces alone. Indeed, even an understanding of these military forces requires an appreciation of the leverage they can provide to attain economic and political objectives. "Power" in the Soviet strategic understanding is perceived not merely as serving specific objectives (for example, "deterrence"), but as negating the enemy's ability to survive. The grasp of this fact is fundamental for the understanding of Soviet strategy and Soviet strategic objectives.*

In the dualism "socialist-capitalist" which underpins Soviet thinking much as the dualism "good-evil" did that of Manicheanism, the United States occupies a special place. It is seen by Russia as the "citadel" of the enemy camp, the main redoubt without the final reduction of which the historic struggle cannot be won no matter how many victories are gained on peripheral fronts. By virtue of its immense productive capacity (and the resultant military potential), its wealth, prestige, its example and moral leadership, and—last but not least—its stockpile of strategic nuclear weapons, the United States is perceived as the keystone of the whole system whose demise is a precondition to the attainment of Communism's ultimate goal.

As seen from Moscow, the United States is something of a paradox in that it is at one and the same time both exceedingly strong and exceedingly weak. Its strength derives primarily from its unique productive capacity and the technological leadership which give it the capacity to sustain a military capability of great sophistication, dangerous to Soviet global ambitions. But the United States is also seen as presently lacking in political will and discipline, unable to mobilize its population and resources for a sustained struggle for world leadership, and devoid of clear national objectives. This assessment has led the Soviet Union to develop a particular strategy vis-à-vis the United States which, under the name first of "peaceful coexistence" and then "detente", has dominated its relations with the United States (except when overshadowed by immediate crisis situations as, e.g., Cuba in 1962 and Czechoslovakia in 1968) over the past two decades.

America's strategic nuclear capacity calls for a cautious Soviet external policy, wherever the U.S. enjoys an advantage or may resolutely resist, at any rate until such a time as the Soviet Union will have attained a decisive military edge. Not only do direct military confrontations raise a threat to the Soviet homeland, but they also tend to feed America's anxieties about the Soviet Union and thus to encourage a high level of military preparedness. An intelligent political Soviet posture toward the United States requires the allaying of the latter's fears of a Soviet threat. (Which does not mean, however, that USSR will hesitate to engage in direct confrontation if they deem it essential to achieve important national objectives). Economic relations ought to be utilized so as to create within the American business community influential sources of support for collaboration with the USSR. Cultural and scientific ties ought to be

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exploited so as to neutralize anti-Communist sentiments in the intellectual community. Encouragement ought to be extended to those American political groupings and to those office-holders and office-seekers who favor better relations with the Soviet Union. The effect of such a policy of "detente" is expected to be a reduction in the influence of those elements in U.S. society which desire greater military preparedness and military R&D, resulting in a weakening of the United States precisely in that sphere where lies its particular strength. Such a policy, furthermore, may bring the Soviet Union valuable additional benefits. As a result of closer economic and scientific links with the United States, the Soviet Union can expect to acquire capital and technology with which to modernize its economy, and in this manner to improve the quality of its military industries.

Soviet motivations for Strategic Arms Limitation Talks should be seen in the same way: They are means to further unilateral advantages instrumental to the continued shift of the strategic balance and to the realization of political gains from the shifting correlation of forces. SALT and the limitations it produces are seen as means of inhibiting U.S. political and military responses to the changing balance of forces. Agreements inconsistent with these ends or agreements that would restrict Soviet ability to further them are unacceptable. *The perception that there is any tension between Soviet interest in SALT and Soviet strategic programs reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of the Soviet approach to SALT*, and of the types of "restrictions" that can be expected from SALT agreements at the present time.

At the same time, however, as provocations of the United States are avoided and economic, cultural, and political contacts with it exploited, nothing must be done that might slacken the global advance against the "capitalist" order of which the same United States is the principal protagonist. It appears that the *intermediate* Soviet strategic objective is to the greatest extent possible *to isolate the United States* from both its allies and the neutral countries of the Third World. This objective can be attained in several ways:

(1) As concerns America's allies: The most important of these are the countries of Western Europe combined in NATO followed by Japan, in the Far East. In respect to these countries, a primary Soviet objective is to drive a wedge between them and the United States. The separation of Europe from the United States can be attempted by a variety of means: establishing on Europe's eastern frontier a military force of such overwhelming preponderance that resistance to it will appear futile and the continuation of NATO not only pointless but dangerous; making Western Europe increasingly dependent economically on the USSR by incurring heavy debts there, entering with it into all sorts of long-term cooperative arrangements, and supplying an increasing share of Western Europe's energy needs; insisting on the participation of Communist parties in national governments; arousing doubts in Western Europe about the U.S. commitments to its defense; and so forth. This objective undoubtedly enjoys very high priority in Russia's strategic thinking. Severance of Western Europe from the United States would reduce any military threat or opposition from that area as well as deprive the U.S. of its European forward bases, eventually bringing Europe's immense productive capacities within the Soviet orbit, thus making the "socialist" camp equal if not superior to the U.S. in economic (and, by implication, military) productive capacities.

(2) As concerns the Third World: Here the stress is on political and economic measures, backed with military means. The Soviet Union strives to sever the links connecting the Third World with the "capitalist" camp, and especially the United States, by:

(a) supporting those political groupings and bureaucracies which tend to identify themselves with policies of nationalizing private enterprises and which broadly back Soviet international policies;

(b) working to undercut such private economic sectors as exist in the underdeveloped countries, and eliminating the influence of multi-national corporations;

(c) reorienting these economies to the maximum extent possible toward the Soviet Union by means of military assistance programs, economic aid, loans, etc;

(d) building interlocking networks of base, overflight, military and logistic agreements etc. which permit the use of surrogate forces (e.g. North Koreans or Cubans) for the purpose of conducting military operations so as to outflank positions important to the West;

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(e) through the creation of voting blocs of Third World countries in the United Nations and its agencies to isolate the United States from them.

(3) In its relations with China, the Soviet leadership has as its main immediate goal access to Chinese internal political developments with a view to influencing long range Chinese orientation in a direction consistent with its view of "Communist internationalism". To support such an evolution and as a hedge against failure in achieving such a future orientation, they intend to be able to face China with preponderant military force even in the contingency of military confrontation with the U.S., and if possible and necessary, with political and military encirclement.

While seeking to isolate the United States, disintegrate the Western camp, and contain China, the Soviet Union is concurrently striving to maintain and strengthen the grip on its own camp. Three principal policies have been initiated toward that end:

(1) Economic integration through the so-called "complex plan" adopted by Comecon under strong Soviet pressure in 1971 and now in the process of implementation. The "complex plan" is a long-term undertaking which strives to transform the separate "socialist" economies into a single supra-national economic system with an internal "division of labor." Investments, labor, research and development are to be shared in common. Given the Soviet Union's economic preponderance, not to speak of its political and military hegemony within the Communist Bloc, there can be little doubt that if it is ever fully carried out, the "complex plan" will give the USSR decisive control over the other "socialist" economies as well as over those countries which, through Soviet aid, are being drawn within the orbit of Comecon.

(2) Political and military integration, both of which the USSR is pressing on the other "socialist" countries. Examples of such pressures are attempts to amend the constitutions of the "Peoples' Republics" so as to assign the Soviet Union special status in their internal and external relations; hints of the need to bring about a closer political union between the "Peoples' Democracies" and the USSR; the Soviet effort to compel these republics to accept the principle that in case of a war between the USSR and China, they will be obliged to come to the aid of the Soviet Union; and recent decisions (made mainly for military reasons) to integrate the East European highway and railway networks with those of the Soviet Union.

(3) The enunciation of a doctrine, called the "Brezhnev Doctrine" in the West and "proletarian internationalism" in the Soviet Union, which makes it both a right and a duty of the "socialist camp" to see to it (by military means, if necessary) that no country which had once made the transition from "capitalism" to "socialism" ever slides back and opts out of the "socialist bloc."

At this point, stress must be laid once again (as had been done in the Foreword to this Report) that *we are making no attempt to assess the probability of the Soviet Union attaining its strategic objectives.* There is, in fact, a great deal of evidence that the USSR is running into many difficulties with the implementation of its policies, and that the record of its grand strategy is often spotty. The evidence, however, supports the contention that the above are, indeed, Soviet objectives.

2. *Military Objectives*

In this global strategy, military power, including strategic nuclear weapons, have a distinct role to play. The Soviet Union, to an extent inconceivable to the average Westerner, relies on force as a standard instrument of policy. It is through force that the Communist regime first came to power, dispersed all opponents of its dictatorship, deprived the peasantry of its land, and established near-total control of the country. It is through military power that it defeated the Nazi attempt to subjugate Russia, and it is through the same means that it subsequently conquered half of Europe and compelled the world to acknowledge it as a "super-power." It is through sheer force that it maintains in the USSR its monopoly on authority and wealth. One may say that power in all its forms, but especially in its military aspect, has been the single most successful instrument of Communist policy, supplanting both ideology and economic planning on which the Soviet regime had originally expected to rely for the spread of its influence.* Thus,

* It is perfectly true, of course, that the use of force as a means of attaining and consolidating political power is not confined to Soviet Russia, being common in other parts of the world as well, including the West. However, what is rather unique to Soviet Russia is that here no serious attempt has been made in the nearly six decades that have elapsed since the coup d'etat of October 1917 to ground political power on a more stable foundation in which law and popular consent would play some significant role.

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the regime has a natural predisposition to look to power, particularly in its most visible and readily applicable modes, as an instrument of policy, whether internal or external. This is the arena where it enjoys some decisive advantages over free societies, in that it can spend money on armaments without worrying about public opinion and mobilize at will its human and material resources. Militarism is deeply ingrained in the Soviet system and plays a central role in the mentality of its elite.

One of the outstanding qualities of Soviet military theory and practice is stress on the need for a great choice of options. This characteristic is to be seen in the broad spectrum of weapons in the arsenal of Soviet "grand strategy" as well as in the variety of military weapons which Russia produces. It would be quite contrary to ingrained habits for the Soviet elite to place reliance on any single weapon, even a weapon as potent as the strategic nuclear one. Its natural inclination is to secure the maximum possible variety of military options for any contingencies that may arise, all based on a real war-fighting capability, and thus both to produce at a high rate a broad range of arms and to accumulate stockpiles of weapons, old and new. This tendency alone militates against the USSR adopting a strategic policy that would place ultimate reliance on a single deterrent or on a "deterrence only" strategic posture. One of the fundamental differences between U.S. and Soviet strategic thought has been the rejection in Soviet doctrine and strategy of such concepts as mutual assured destruction, the underlying logic of which is that if deterrence fails neither side can hope to win a nuclear war. Rather, the main thrust of Soviet doctrine has been that in the event of a failure of deterrence, war-winning and national survival prospects can be improved by having in readiness balanced forces superior to those of the adversary, together with an effective civil defense system.

The USSR can be expected to continue pressing forward with large-scale diverse military programs on a broad front, any one of which might be regarded as containable by the West, but the cumulative effects of which may well be far more significant.

We do know that during Khrushchev's premiership there occurred a debate about the fundamentals of Soviet military doctrine, and in particular about the impact of nuclear weapons on doctrine. Khrushchev himself apparently encouraged a pragmatic examination of the prevalent Western view that the destructiveness of nuclear weapons had altered the nature of war to the extent that deterrence of war rather than war-fighting capabilities should determine military policy. This view challenged the fundamental Marxist-Leninist tenet drawn from Clausewitz that "war is an extension of politics by other means." Acceptance of the Western deterrence theory would have challenged the basic Marxist-Communist view that the capitalist world in its "death throes" is certain to lash out in war at the Communist camp.

This flirtation with Western concepts of deterrence was born in an era of obvious U.S. strategic superiority over the USSR. Eventually, the debate, which seems to have lasted until at least the mid-1960's, was settled in favor of the adherents of Clausewitz. The notion that strategic nuclear weapons had made general war mutually suicidal came to be denounced as heretical: the new doctrine declared that a nuclear war could be waged and won. The view which prevailed holds that in a general war "victory" will mean the triumph of Soviet military and political control over the world that emerges from the devastating conflict. (Within this framework, limiting civilian damage to the USSR is important not only as an end in itself but in relation to preserving the post-war political-economic power of the Soviet Union: hence, protection of the key cadres is of particular importance.) General nuclear war was still to be avoided if at all possible, which meant that other weapons in the Soviet arsenal—conventional military, political economic, etc.—were preferable instruments to support policy goals, with Soviet strategic nuclear weapons inhibiting Western counteractions.

The key decision adopted sometime in the 1960's seems to have had as one of its consequences the effort to build up all the branches of the military forces—strategic, conventional, naval—to the point where the Soviet Union could both confidently confront any possible hostile coalition raised against it (including a Sino-American alliance) and project its power in any region of the world where suitable opportunities might arise.

Since that time an intensified military effort has been under way designed to provide the Soviet Union with *nuclear as well as conventional superiority both in strategic forces for intercontinental conflict and theater or regional forces.* While hoping to crush the "capitalist" realm by other than military means, *the*

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Soviet Union is nevertheless preparing for a Third World War as if it were unavoidable. The pace of the Soviet armament effort in all fields is staggering; *it certainly exceeds any requirement for mutual deterrence.* The continuing buildup of the Warsaw Pact forces bears no visible relationship to any plausible NATO threat; it can better be interpreted in terms of intimidation or conquest. The rapid growth of the Soviet Navy also seems to be connected more with the desire to pose a threat than merely to defend the Soviet homeland. Intensive research and/or testing in the fields of Anti-Submarine Warfare, Anti-Ballistic Missiles, Anti-Satellite weapons, as described in Part Two of this report, all point in the same direction. So do the massive Soviet civil defense and hardening programs. And so does the high proportion of the national budget devoted to direct military expenditures. The intensity and scope of the current Soviet military effort in peacetime is without parallel in twentieth century history, its only counterpart being Nazi remilitarization of the 1930's.

Short of war, the utility of an overwhelming military power for Moscow may be described as follows:

(1) It enables the USSR to forestall a United States (and potentially a Chinese or combined U.S.-Chinese) effort to compel the Soviet Union to alter any of its policies under the threat of a nuclear attack;

(2) It accords the Soviet Union "super-power" status which it interprets to mean that no significant decisions can be taken in any part of the world without its participation and consent;

(3) It intimidates smaller powers, especially those located adjacent to the USSR, making them more pliant to Soviet wishes. Judging by their pronouncements, it appears that some highly placed Soviet leaders believe that even the U.S. acceptance of detente ultimately resulted from a recognition of the Soviet capacity to intimidate.

(4) It will in time give the Soviet Union the capacity to project its power to those parts of the world where pro-Soviet forces have an opportunity to seize power but are unable to do so without outside military help;

(5) It is a source of influence on countries which purchase or receive surplus Soviet arms, as well as of hard currency earnings; 25X1

(6) It is an instrument by means of which, in the decisive moment in the struggle for world hegemony, the retaliatory power of the United States can be preventively neutralized, or, if necessary, actively broken.

Military power has for the Soviet Union so many uses and it is so essential to its global strategy that the intensity and scope of its military buildup should not be in the least surprising.

3. Conclusion

The principal Soviet strategic objectives *in the broadest sense* may be defined as follows: Break up the "capitalist" camp by isolating the United States, its backbone, from NATO and the Third World; undermine further the disintegrating "capitalist" realm by promoting and exploiting such economic, political, and social crises as may occur in it over time; solidify the "socialist" camp and Russia's control over it; contain China; and all the time continue building up a military force of such overwhelming might that it can in due time carry out any global missions required of it by Soviet policies.

In the *more narrow sense* of strategic objectives used by NIE 11-3/8, the scope and vigor of Soviet programs, supported by identifiable doctrinal imperatives, leave little reasonable doubt that Soviet leaders are determined to achieve the maximum attainable measure of strategic superiority over the U.S., a superiority which provides conservative hedges against unpredictable wartime contingencies; which is unrestrained by concepts of "how much is enough?"; and which is measured not in Western assured destruction terms but rather in terms of war-fighting objectives of achieving post-war dominance and limiting damage to the maximum extent possible. We believe that Soviet leaders, supported by internal political factors that assign the highest resource priority to the military, place a high priority on the attainment of a superiority that would deny the U.S. effective retaliatory options against a nuclear attack. Short of that, the Soviets intend to have a substantial enough strategic nuclear-warfighting advantage to be able to bring their local military advantages in both conventional and nuclear forces to bear without fear of a U.S.—initiated escalation.

The question of the extent to which such goals remain mere long term aspirations or have become

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practical and current objectives, as well as the question of timing, inevitably arise. It was pointed out in the Introduction that Team "B" focused on Soviet strategic objectives without trying to evaluate their chances for success, since the latter would require a net assessment which exceeds the scope of this effort. However, the team recognizes the overwhelming gravity of this question. Even without a net assessment, the team believes that it is possible, relying on the evidence available in Soviet pronouncements and in the physical data, to reach some judgments as to how the Russian leaders assess their chances of success.

The breadth and intensity of Soviet military programs, statements by Soviet leaders to internal audiences, available Soviet literature, and the growing confidence of Soviet global behavior, all lead us to conclude that *in Soviet perceptions the gap between long-term aspirations and short-term objectives is closing.* This probably means that the Soviet leaders believe that their ultimate objectives are closer to realization today than they have ever been before. *Within the ten year period of the National Estimate the Soviets may well expect to achieve a degree of military superiority which would permit a dramatically more aggressive pursuit of their hegemonial objectives,* including direct military challenges to Western vital interests, in the belief that such superior military force can pressure the West to acquiesce or, if not, can be used to win a military contest at any level. The actions taken by the West to develop its political cohesion and military strength will be critical in determining whether, how, and when the Soviets press to such conclusion.

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ANNEX

SOVIET STRATEGIC NUCLEAR FORCES AS PERCEIVED BY NIE'S, 1962-1975

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ANNEX

SOVIET STRATEGIC NUCLEAR FORCES AS PERCEIVED BY NIE'S, 1962-1975

National estimates on Soviet strategic nuclear forces since 1962 have been based not only on observed Soviet programs but also on assessments of Soviet strategic policy, motivations, and objectives. While proper, and certainly necessary at least to mid-to-long range projections, these assessments have characteristically been ethnocentric, "mirror-image", and reflective more of U.S. policies and motives than of Soviet. As such they seem to have been fundamentally responsible for consistent understatements of Soviet strategic goals. These basically political assessments have been far more optimistic than subsequent developments proved and—since there were more pessimistic interpretations occasionally contained in footnotes—it can be argued that they were more optimistic than warranted by available contemporary evidence. Frequently, the political assessments appear to have been little more than articles of faith and statements of preference, which tended to persist even in the face of developments that should have invalidated them (e.g., the attribution to the Soviets of American arms control and assured destruction logic and objectives, which first appeared in NIE 11-8-63, can be found *mutatis mutandis*, through the 1960s and even up to NIE 11-3/8-75.)

NIE 11-8-63 conjectured that the Soviets were guided by "no well-defined strategic concept," were "willing to tolerate a condition of limited intercontinental capabilities and considerable vulnerability over a long period of time," and were not "seeking to match the United States in numbers of delivery vehicles" or contemplating forces to neutralize U.S. strategic forces.* In addition, for the first time, apparently American strategic arms control thinking infiltrated the Estimate. It was suggested that the Soviets might be interested in "international agreements to limit or reverse the arms race," while "in the absence of an arms limitation agreement"—but only in the absence of one—"the Soviets will continue improving their capabilities, but at a moderate pace."*

NIE 11-8-64 reiterated: "We do not believe that the USSR aims atmatching the United States in numbers of intercontinental delivery vehicles." In fact, the Estimate actually "ruled out this option,"** on the basis of economic constraints, concern over provoking the U.S. to new efforts, and lack of firm strategic objectives in the direction of parity with the U.S. As a consequence, the Estimate, even though noting that a third generation of Soviet ICBMs had been flight tested since December 1963 and a new SSBN under construction had appeared at Severodvinsk, did not forecast any very large scale or determined buildup of Soviet strategic forces.

These conclusions prevailed in the next two annual Estimates, as did a remarkable conviction that the Soviets had no mid-to-long range force goals:

> "The Soviet planners themselves may not yet have set clear force goals for the 1970-1975 period."***

> "The major difference (from the Khrushchev era) in the coming period may be the inability of a collective leadership to chart a new course."****

Even as it was necessary to revise force level projections upward in the face of continuing Soviet

* NIE 11-8-63, p. 5, Paragraphs 19-21.

* *IBID.*, p. 6, Paragraph 22.

** NIE 11-8-64, pp. 1-2, Paragraph B.

*** NIE 11-8-65, p. 1.

**** *Ibid.*, p. 5.

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construction programs, the estimators "mirror-imaging" of U.S. assured destruction and arms race-arms control logic combined with insistence upon social-economic constraints on military programs to bias the Estimates. Whatever the strengthening of Soviet forces, it was consistently maintained that the Soviets would "continue to adhere to the concept of a deterrent force," and Soviet objectives were cast in the Western terms of a *retaliatory* assured destruction force: the Soviets were building a retaliatory capability to "assure the destruction of a significant portion of U.S. industrial resources and population."* "Arms race" logic popular within the U.S. Administration at that time governed the Estimates: The Soviets were *at the same time* reactionally motivated by U.S. forces ("the large U.S. ICBM force almost certainly influences the USSR to increase its force, and U.S. deployment of ballistic missile defenses might incline them toward even higher numbers."),** and constrained by fear of an arms race (the Soviets "would probably judge that if they appeared to be acquiring as many ICBMs as the U.S. they would simply stimulate a further arms race").*** The net outcome of that inconsistency was the judgement that the Soviets were seeking neither superiority nor parity. Only an Air Force footnote forecast "Soviet dissatisfaction with a posture of strategic inferiority vis-a-vis the U.S. and a determination to eliminate such inferiority."****

By 11-8-67, after the numbers of operational Soviet ICBM launchers had tripled in only two years and the production of the Yankee SSBN was clear, the estimators revised Soviet goals somewhat and attributed to the Soviets the objective of "narrowing the lead that the U.S. has held" in strategic offensive forces.***** The Soviets *might* seek an advantage over the U.S. in strategic forces, if they believed it were possible, but—now following mutual assured destruction and mutual deterrence logic—this was clearly not believed likely.

NIEs 11-8-68 and 11-8-69 were the first Estimates strongly influenced by U.S. SALT rationale and aspirations, to the point of becoming rationalizations for SALT. With Soviet ICBM launchers approaching U.S. numerical levels, 11-8-68 predicted that "the Soviets will shortly overcome the U.S. lead in numbers of ICBM launchers"* (not SLBM), but concern over an uncertain future and continued arms competition would lead the Soviet Union to arms limitation agreements, as would their reasoning "that further increments to their strategic forces would have little effect on the relationship between the U.S. and the USSR".** The Estimate openly constructed a case for Soviet interest in arms limitation agreements designed to end the "arms race," concluding that "they are evidently interested in strategic arms control as an option that could conserve economic resources."*** Only failing such an agreement would the Soviets continue to build up strategically: "In the absence of an arms control agreement, we believe that they will continue the arms competition with the U.S."**** Even in that event, however, Soviet strategic goals would be limited by (Mutual Assured Destruction) MAD realities. The estimators considered it "highly unlikely" that the Soviets would "try for strategic superiority of such an order that it could be translated into significant political gain."***** Such an attempt, the Soviets would recognize, would be ineffectual, would involve unacceptable economic sacrifices, and "would almost certainly provoke a strong U.S. reaction."******

Only the possibility of superiority for political advantage was considered by the Estimates (and rejected); the possibility of superiority for military advantage, and particularly a capability to limit U.S. retaliation to "tolerable levels," was dismissed out of hand as absolutely "not feasible."

Now, however, by 11-8-69,******* mutual deterrence *parity* became the reality, the ultimate Soviet goal, and not undesirable state—to be legitimized and preserved through SALT. Soviet willingness to enter

* NIE 11-8-66, p. 6, Paragraph 2.

** NIE 11-8-65, p. 5, Paragraph 4. 25X1

*** *Ibid.*, p. 13, Paragraph 30.

**** NIE 11-S-66, p. 1, Footnote.

***** NIE 11-8-67, p. 1, Paragraph A.

* NIE 11-8-68, p. 1, Paragraph A.

** *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5, Paragraph 4.

*** *Ibid.*, p. 1, Paragraph B.

**** *Ibid.*, p. 1, Paragraph A.

***** *Ibid.*, p. 5, Paragraph 6.

****** *Ibid.*, p. 5, Paragraph 6.

******* One other feature of 11-8-69, which was motivated by anticipation of SALT and SALT limitations, was that it was the first NIE on strategic forces to drop MR/IRBMs and Badgers-Blinders from Strategic Attack Forces, limiting Forces for Intercontinental Attack to ICBM, SLBM, and heavy bombers, a turn around from earlier estimates in this series which defined the subject forces as those of 700 nm range or more.

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SALT was taken as evidence of SALT interests similar to those of the U.S. That the Soviets might view SALT differently was not even given serious consideration:

> "Moscow's willingness to discuss strategic arms control probably reflects the view that it has attained or is in the process of attaining an acceptable strategic relationship with the U.S. Moreover, Moscow may believe that even if an agreement could not be reached, negotiations would have the effect of damping down the arms race, perhaps for a considerable time."*
>
> "If forces on both sides could be maintained at something like present levels, such a policy might be attractive to the Soviets."**
>
> BUT: "In the absence of an arms control agreement, Moscow will almost certainly continue to strengthen its strategic forces."***

This sentiment was reinforced in 11-8-70, and 11-8-71, both of which argued that the Soviets wanted merely to have "a sense of equal security with the U.S.," which would be satisfied with "rough parity," *the* objective of their recent strategic force buildup, now at hand. Evidence ("much of it from the SALT") indicates that "the Soviet leaders think they have now achieved that position, or are about to achieve it," and are consequently "seriously interested" in a SALT agreement to preserve it.

> "It has been evident for some time (sic) that an important Soviet objective has been the achievement of a position of acknowledged strategic parity with the U.S. Soviet acceptance of strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) was intended in part to secure U.S. recognition of this parity."****

The Estimates were so confident in the assignation of this goal that they stated that the reasons for the Soviet buildup are "neither complex nor obscure:"***** parity with the U.S. Not to make war, or to secure objectives through pressure backed by theater levels of nuclear force, but to be equal and to deter. Even so, 11-8-71 suggested that that objective may have come about willy-nilly through pluralistic bureaucratic happenstance: "We think it unlikely that observed Soviet programs are the product of a carefully thought out strategy or rationale."* That the Soviet leaders might be determined to achieve strategic superiority over the U.S. or might even consider it a feasible objective, was explicitly poohpoohed. Constraints, including economic constraints and fear of an arms race, were again emphasized.

NIE 11-8-72 was the first SALT-Agreement-NIE: The agreements, it announced, "have profound implications . . . they create a new milieu." After repeating verbatim the statements of the preceding NIE, noted above, and emphasizing again the putative constraints on the USSR, the SALT agreements were cited as constraints as well as faithful reflections of Soviet limited strategic objectives:

> "In the context of arms control, other pressures for moderation will be at work.
>
> The SAL agreements have been hailed in the USSR as a successful manifestation of the current Soviet policy of detente; consequently *there will be incentives to avoid actions which, though not actually violating the agreements, might jeopardize them.*" (Emphasis added.)**

"Any step which might constitute a threat to the agreements," the NIE confidently asserted, would disturb the personal stake that Soviet leaders "most notably Brezhnev" have in the agreements.

By NIE 11-8-73, in contrast to earlier suggestions that Soviet strategic offensive force programs lacked coherent direction, other than perhaps to attain rough parity in retaliatory capability, the breadth and intensity of effort—"unprecedented"—led to an assessment that "the present Soviet effort involves more than can be readily explained as merely trying to keep up with the competition."*** In the SALT framework, moreover, it was pointed out that the new families of programs were "conceived long before the Interim Agreement was signed in May 1972."**** The Soviets were clearly not exercising the care not to disturb the agreements formerly predicted. Nonetheless, the continuation of mutual deterrence, detente, and SALT thinking in the Estimate produced

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* NIE 11-8-69, p. 7, Paragraph 6.
** *Ibid.*, p. 8, Paragraph 11.
*** *Ibid.*, p. 7, Paragraph 7.
**** NIE 11-8-70, pp. 15-16, Paragraph 11.
***** *Ibid.*, p. 5, Paragraph M.

* NIE 11-8-71, p. 7, Paragraph P.
* NIE 11-8-72, p. 8, Paragraph U.
** NIE 11-8-73, p. 3.
****Ibid.*, p. 1.

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ambivalence: On the one hand, hope: The continued Soviet buildup "is not yet irreversible, and the Soviets may prove willing to accept some curbs on it within the broader context of their detente policy."* On the other hand, concern: "they have shown little disposition to exercise voluntary restraint."**

As to Soviet strategic goals, despite explicit recognition of pursuit of greater throw weight, numbers of RVs, and counter-force capabilities, assured destruction logic continued to prevail. Not only was it judged (Red/Blue implicit net assessment) that "*under no foreseeable circumstances in the next 10 years*"*** (emphasis added) could the Soviets develop the ability to reduce damage to themselves to acceptable levels, but Soviet programs were also explained largely in the framework of retaliatory assured destruction (e.g., increased concern for retaliatory force survivability) and equal security objectives. Soviet incentives to press on broadly with improved weapons systems derived from "competing drives" of internal politics, from "concern with being accepted as at least the strategic equal of the U.S.,"**** and from "genuine concern that the USSR could fall behind strategically."***** Even if the Soviet leaders felt that they could obtain a lead in static measures of strategic power this would convey an image of marginal superiority only to "those who ascribe high significance to these measures."****** (Not very important, by implication.)

That the Soviets might have entirely different strategic goals and concepts was not seriously considered despite doctrinal and program evidence strongly supporting such a proposition.

By this point of time the breadth of the Soviet ICBM and SLBM effort was well recognized—"a vigorous and costly buildup of the various elements of their forces for intercontinental attack"*******—as was the rapid qualitative improvement of these forces—with the exception of continued underestimation of the progress made in improving the accuracies of these missiles. (For the SS-18 and SS-19 see "B" Team report Soviet ICBM Accuracy: An Alternative Assessment.) NIE 11-8-72 first noted the appearance of follow-on ICBMs to the SS-9 and SS-11, and the appearance of the Delta SSBN carrying the SS-N-8, but placed the development of MIRVs at least 2-3 years away.

What is noteworthy is the continued absence of recognition of Soviet strategic counterforce emphasis and aspirations. It is curious that, despite all of the emphasis placed on throw weight in the context of SALT preparations and by the Department of Defense (even in unclassified SEC DEF statements), no point is made of Soviet throw weight even through 1972; and no relation is made between that capability and the direction of qualitative improvements to draw counterforce implications. While the estimated RV weights are noted, and the possible throw weight of the new large missile is suggested in supporting analysis, no emphasis whatsoever is given to throw weight or to counterforce aims.

NIE 11-8-73 (January 1974) noted the throw weights estimated for the new ICBMs and observes that each has substantially more throw weight than the missile it will replace but no particular emphasis is given to this. Although a probable Soviet desire to improve hard target counterforce capabilities is noted, barely, in passing, in no sense is that registered as among major objectives. Soviet programs continue to be presented in Western "mirror-image" terms, such as "increased concern for the survivability" of retaliatory forces. The major reasons given for the Soviets pressing ahead simultaneously across a broad front of strategic force programs are:

> "to accommodate competing drives within the party leadership and military and defense production ministries and to overcome reservations about arms control"*
>
> "genuine concern that the USSR could fall behind strategically or lose some of its own bargaining leverage if it failed fully to hold up its side of the strategic competition"**

That the Soviets might have strategic objectives more sinister than "comprehensive equality with the U.S." and perhaps "some degree of strategic advantage if U.S. behavior permits" is not in the slightest

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Ibid., p. 4
**Ibid.*, p. 4.
***Ibid.*, p. 5.
****Ibid.*, p. 20, Paragraph 68.
*****Ibid.*, pp. 20-21, Paragraph 71.
******Ibid.*, p. 5.
******* NIE 11-8-72, p. 2, Paragraph B.

* *Ibid.*, p. 20, Paragraph 70.
** *Ibid.*, pp. 20-21, Paragraph 71.

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degree considered.* In fact it is suggested that "the need to maintain the present level of economic commitment to strategic forces may appear less pressing in the future." And: "How far the Soviets will go in carrying out these lines of development will depend in the first instance on the SALT II negotiations."**

For the first time, the NIE 11-3/8-75 (Volume I) raises more ominous possible directions for the Soviet strategic attack force program (not, however, for the strategic defensive program): Soviet forces have moved and the "well beyond the minimum requirements of deterrence"*** capability of the Soviet ICBM force to destroy U.S. Minuteman "is growing. It will probably pose a major threat in the early 1980s."**** Despite that, the *net assessment*, both politically and militarily, remains a comfortable one—far more comfortable than the hard evidence contained in the NIE warrants. Part of the reason for this lies in implicit assessments of Blue capabilities, part in treating the matter in an assured-destruction-only framework (and discounting civil defense in that framework), and part in continuing to see basic Soviet motivations, objectives, and logic in American terms. (For specific examples, see the supporting "B" Team topical papers.

The Soviets would try to achieve strategic dominance, including a first strike capability, "if they thought they could achieve it," but "*we do not believe*" they believe it. While some measure of strategic superiority, "which has some visible and *therefore politically useful advantages*" (emphasis added—first acknowledgement of such advantage from a strategic force balance), and which might even give the Soviets "better capabilities than the U.S. to fight a nuclear war," Soviet objectives—and prospects—are in fact comparatively modest, and heavily influenced by SALT.* The NIE makes the judgement that these objectives will remain "*if a SALT TWO agreement is not achieved.*"** (At this point the NIE becomes as much a superficial apologia for SALT II as an intelligence estimate on Soviet forces. The forces the Soviets would regard as adequate under a SALT II agreement are treated as much different from, and are contrasted with, those they would pursue in absence of an agreement.)

Finally, in any case, the Soviets could not expect that during the next ten years they could launch an attack on the U.S. and prevent (escape?) "devastating retaliation" because:

- a considerable number of Minuteman would survive
- all but a few US SSBNs would survive
- confidence in ability to defend against bombers would be low
- defenses, including ABM ("insignificant") and civil defense would not be effective.

That there are other applications and consequences of their strategic forces is submerged in this final assured destruction rationale.

* *Ibid.*
** *Ibid.*, p. 21, Paragraph 74.
*** NIE 11-3/8-75, Volume 1, p. 11, Paragraph 2.
**** *Ibid.*, p. 2.

* *Ibid.*, p. 5.
** *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.

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